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ABSTRACT

This report describes an investigation of the recent senior adult theatre movement conducted by the American Theatre Association Senior Adult Theatre Project. Sections of the report concern: (1) the types of senior adult theatre organizations reporting, including those developed by parent theatre organizations and residential communities and those sponsored by universities and colleges and by civic and social organizations: (2) the goals and objectives of senior adult theatre groups, including therapy, issue exploration, cross generational contact, professional training, entertaining audiences, and touring: and (3) working principles and techniques practiced by senior adult theatre groups, such as play reading, variety, oral history, original play development, and creative drama and improvisational techniques. Other sections discuss theatre attendance programs, key variables in senior adult theatre, the question of artistic quality in senior adult theatre, and research in senior adult theatre. The appendixes include a list of contributors to the report, a selected reading list, and a directory of reporting senior adult theatre groups. (MKM)

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OLDER AMERICANS ON STAGE

The Report to the Alliance for Arts Education of the American Theatre Association Senior Adult Theatre Project

Jack Morrison, American Theatre Association,
Project Director

Roger Cornish, The Pennsylvania State University,
Writer

C.R. Kase, Professor Emeritus, University of Delaware,
Investigator

Horrace W. Robinson, Professor Emeritus, University of
Oregon
Investigator

Patricia Royston Sawyer, American Theatre Association,
Investigator-Bibliographer

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PREFACE

BY: Jack Morrison

This probe, this sortie into the goings-on of Senior Adults in theatre across our land was designed quite consciously as a probe not a study. Limited funds dictated that. But, even so, the paucity of information made a more expansive study impossible. We needed time for poking around and listening to what's happening. Our findings, we hope, may make more sophisticated studies possible.

Audaciously, we gave Horace Robinson everything west of the Mississippi with Bob Kase and Roger Cornish taking the Eastern half. Patricia Sawyer gathered bibliographical materials. Everyone started from scratch. Horace began writing personal letters to some of his former theatre students asking for information and the whereabouts of Senior Adult Theatre and theatre programs. Then he and his wife, Gwen, pursued these leads in their motor-home.

In various ways we have gathered what may be a "critical mass" of information to serve the development and determination of directions for our Association's work in this area and the work of the Alliance for Arts Education. This work, particularly for the Senior Adult Theatre Program with C. Robert Kase as chair, is for all of those concerned.

Even with the limitations of a probe, our editor, Roger Cornish, in consultation with the rest of us, wrote the report together and provided some useful observations. It's clear, for example, that most groups believe themselves to be the only ones like it in the world and that technical assistance, broadly defined, would be very helpful.

In any case, we are grateful for the funding of this probe by the National Committee of the Alliance for Arts Education and its chair, Jean Kennedy Smith. It has provided a first step for developing policy and programs for Senior Adult Theatre in our country.

INTRODUCTION

"Senior Drama: Hottest Trend in Theater" shouts the headline of the Washington Post Arts Section of 20 October 1977. Would that elevating embryonic arts movement to an established fact were as easy as setting newspaper headlines. Unfortunately, although senior adult theatre may indeed have become a topic of interest to some theatre people, it is by no means clear that it is in any way hot if by hot is meant profitable, professional, or popular. It is by no means established clearly that very many people have either heard of, seen, or come to care about senior adult theatre. It is perhaps more reasonable to say senior adult theatre is still simmering on the back burner than to call it hot. The true public interest in and knowledge of topics like senior adult theatre is perhaps better described in the National Endowment for the Arts Report delivered to the Senate Special Committee on Aging in 1978. Said the Report:

> Perhaps the most persistent barrier to developing quality arts programs for older Americans is that the public at large, and arts administrators and artists in particular, do not fully understand the relationship of the arts to individuals over 65 years of age.

It is that lack of understanding that prompts this investigation and its report, "Older Americans on Stage." The Senior Adult Theatre Project, it is hoped, will represent a first limited but significant probe into the largely uninvestigated area of senior adult theatre.

Senior Adult Theatre--Phenomenon of the '70's

Having questioned whether senior adult theatre can legitimately be called hot, it is legitimate to point out that the seventies is probably the first decade in which it has been a possible topic at all. That is not to say that there was no such thing as senior adult theatre in previous periods; wherever old people have tried to express themselves through theatrical art we may say there has been senior adult theatre. However, only in this decade has there been any conscious thrust toward recognizing senior adult theatre as an arts entity.

This decade saw the birth of several American Theatre Association subgroups dedicated to the topic.[1] This decade saw the publication of the first book devoted to the topic. And this decade has seen the advent of the first professionally based companies devoted to senior theatre.

Almost all of the companies, groups, and workshops which will be mentioned in this report were born in the seventies (and some of them have died during the seventies). But fairness and grace require us to acknowledge that older Americans, who have always been ready and able to do more than we have given them credit for, did not wait for the seventies to start their own theatres. To such current groups as Hawaii's Pohai Nani Players, established in 1966, and Portland, Oregon's Theatre of Feast, established in 1962, this report might well make a special dedication. And to one reporting group in particular, The Youngtown Players of Youngtown, Arizona, founded in 1959 by Dina Reese Evans Shaw (herself a charter member of the American Theatre Association, founded in 1936) a group that has demonstrated that retirees could mount on their own and sustain a community theatre for twenty years, every person interested in the arts for older Americans owes a debt of respect and admiration.

Objectives of the Project

The primary objective of the Senior Adult Theatre Project is to develop a first view of senior adult theatre in the late 70's--its scope, participants, problems, and promises. Put in terms of research questions, the Project asks who is doing it, how are they doing it, and how well are they doing at it?

A secondary objective is to point the way for further research which might be undertaken by the Alliance for Arts Education, the American Theatre Association, or other agencies or individuals.

Yet another objective is to develop a preliminary directory of senior adult theatre organizations so that communication among them or between them and other interested parties may be facilitated.

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[1] The Senior Citizens Theatre Committee, American Community Theatre Association, the Senior Adult Theatre Committee, Children's Theatre Association of America, and the National Committee on Senior Adult Theatre, American Theatre Association.

All of these objectives, if achieved, will simply pave the way for the extended effort which many organizations and individuals will have to mount if senior adult theatre is to become a healthy branch of the American theatre community in the same way as are, say, children's theatre, community theatre, or regional professional theatre.

Inception of the Senior Adult Theatre Project

In the Fall of 1977 having reached agreement with the Alliance for Arts Education for support of a senior adult theatre research proble, the Project Director convened key members of the American Theatre Association's National Committee on Senior Adult Theatre and agreed with them on a division of responsibility. It was agreed that under the general coordination of Project Director Morrison, C.R. Kase, Chairman of the Committee, and Horace Robinson, one of the original members, should divide responsibility for data gathering. To Professor Kase was assigned the task of probing senior adult theatre activities east of the Mississippi; to Professor Robinson activities west of the Mississippi. Patricia Sawyer was assigned the tasks of building report files, constructing the project bibliography, and visiting or otherwise investigating in depth specially designated groups whose initial reports would indicate that follow-up would be appropriate.

In June of 1978, Professor Roger Cornish, a member of the Committee, was invited to a Project working session at Washington A.T.A. headquarters. It was then agreed that he would become the principal writer of the report as well as an occasional data collector.

Limitations of the Project

The reader should understand that a basic premise of the Project is that the phrase *senior adult theatre* implies theatre *by* seniors, theatre activities in which seniors act, write, direct, build sets, or otherwise contribute to the theatre experience in an active way. This is not to suggest that programs designed merely to make the audience experience more accessible to the elderly are unimportant. (In fact, such programs are discussed in the body of this report.) But the thrust of investigation was toward discovering and describing theatres, congregate centers, and clubs in which seniors play an active part in theatre and theatre-related activity.

The nature of the data-gathering effort sets certain parameters for this report. Data was collected under less-than-perfect conditions. Lacking a sampling frame from which to draw a survey sample (or census list, for that matter) the investigators had to seek out persons and organizations who might be involved in senior adult theatre. (Obviously, through their service on the Senior Adult Theatre Committee and prior activities in the field, the investigators knew of some groups at the start.)

Groups were identified in several ways. First, all state arts councils, officers of American Theatre Association boards, regions, and chapters, and some 200 national agencies concerned with the arts and/or aging were solicited for the names and addresses of theatre programs for the elderly. Second, investigators Robinson and Sawyer attended numerous theatre and aging conferences to solicit more program leads. Third, contact lists of conference attendees were contacted by mail. Fourth, Project notices were placed in seven publications of arts and aging agencies. In all, over 600 mail solicitations were made and 250 leads produced. Each group so identified received a report request detailing specific information needed by the Project.

The reports submitted by those people cooperating fit no particular format. Some reporting found the time to submit only a few hand-scratched notes on scrap paper. Others sent reams of material--clippings, programs, well thought out descriptions of their operations, etc. Whether skimpy or voluminous, the reports were idiosyncratic, fragmentary, and subjective. The analysis of such varied data is necessarily impressionistic; this is not, therefore, a qualitative report which can be subjected to statistical verification. It is instead a series of intelligent generalizations developed from a careful examination of rich but rough materials.

Obviously, the reader should examine this report accordingly. The general conclusions that he finds therein must be taken not as pronouncements, but as tentative attempts based as often upon inference as upon the direct apprehension of measurable data. This is not necessarily bad, however. A disadvantage of standard statistical research is that the analyst and reporter is limited to dealing with those factors which could be anticipated in preplanning and which lend themselves to statistical expression. An impressionistic report like this one can address any idea or fact that a source chooses to inject into the data.

Two other limiting factors should be mentioned. The project budget did not allow for many site visits. Thus, only a few of the senior adult theatre programs discussed were actually seen in action by members of the Project Team. For this reason, there is little said in this report about the artistic quality of the activities discussed. Where the question of artistic quality is addressed, it is treated as an abstraction; there is no evidence to allow its being treated otherwise.

Finally, reports received from the projects queried arrived in material form best described as fugitive. That is, they are letters, notes, clippings, snapshots, programs, etc. A certain amount of information was gathered in telephone conversations. It was therefore decided that readers of this report would not be well served by a standard citation system. Accordingly, the reader will find that senior adult theatre groups providing significant testimony on particular matters are referred to by name throughout the text. Should the reader wish to know more about such a group's position in a matter under discussion, he should refer to the Directory of Reporting Senior Adult Theatre Groups and contact that group at the address given.

I. TYPES OF SENIOR ADULT ORGANIZATIONS

Examination of the field of organizations reporting reveals immediately that most senior adult theatre groups owe their existence to some larger organization. That is, individuals do not ordinarily come together for the first time for the express purpose of starting a senior adult theatre group. Instead, some pre-existent organization or group provides impetus to the senior adult theatre enterprise. The most common categories of parent organizations are: 1) preexisting theatre organizations; 2) educational institutions; 3) senior residential communities; and 4) social service organizations devoted to the elderly. This section shall consider senior theatre groups according to those categories of authorship. However, it should be acknowledged that it is at least possible for truly independent senior theatre groups to arise; two groups reporting to the Project apparently owe their development to no parent agency.

One of the oldest senior theatre organizations is Portland, Oregon's Theatre of Feast, founded by Alberto Cereghino in the 1960's and claiming continuous operation since 1969. This company, whose membership ranges in age from 72 to 96, has toured Oregon and neighboring states performing a wide variety of performance and workshop sessions devoted to such activities as creative writing, dance, acting and play direction. By means of the contributions it receives from host organizations to which it tours, this group has managed to exist without institutional support or more than occasional outside funding. Its persistent efforts have earned for Theatre of Feast commendations from the Governors of Oregon and Idaho, the White House, and the National Endowment for the Arts. At lease one other senior adult theatre group credits Theatre of Feast as the inspiration for its own founding.

Across the country, Boston's New Wrinkle Theatre also owes its existence not to any institution but to the efforts of an individual--Mark Rider--who organized the group in 1974. New Wrinkle Theatre offers both traditional play performances--generally one-act plays and cuttings from full length plays--and workshops to schools and congregate centers for the elderly throughout the Boston area. Perhaps because it claims no organizational affiliation, the over-sixty theatre group, which is supplemented by a few younger performers, has no permanent base of operations, but has worked in a series of donated spaces such as church basements. New Wrinkle has grown to a substantial organization of paid, partly paid, and volunteer workers.

The rest of this section shall be devoted to considering groups whose existence seems tightly bound to some other kind of organization.

Senior Adult Theatre Groups Developed by Parent Theatre Organizations

Numerous reasons may prompt existing theatres to organize senior adult theatre activities. A community theatre may wish simply to involve a previously untouched segment of its constituency. A professional theatre may wish to put itself in a position to obtain grant monies available for work with senior adults. Whatever the case, at least seventeen of the reporting groups are directly linked to previously existing theatre organizations. For the purpose of this discussion, these organizations shall be divided into professional or semi-professional and community theatres.*

Community Theatres. The Friends Mime Theatre of Wauwatosa, Wisconsin, the Illusion Theatre of Minneapolis, and the Gallery Players of McMinnville, Oregon have all given birth to senior companies. In 1975, the Gallery Players started their M'Turing Company as a direct result of seeing work by Portland's Theatre of Feast (see above). M'Turing Company whose members range from 55 to 90, concentrates on reader's theatre and began touring local clubs in 1976. Also touring has been the Senior Citizen Theatre, a project of the Friends Mime Theatre. Senior Citizens Theatre began with a story theatre presentation based on the life of Helen Keller and thereafter added workshop activities to be offered to its host organizations, which have included churches, nursing homes, and clubs. The Illusion Theatre launched an improvisation senior group called Senior Stars, which began touring local nursing homes and senior citizen centers in 1974.

Other community theatres involve seniors without actually forming special companies. In Fort Wayne, Indiana, the Civic Theatre developed R.S.V.P. Civic Senior, a program bringing seniors into the regular production activities of the Civic Theatre. ACTION sponsored R.S.V.P. (Retired Senior Volunteer Program) collaborated with the Civic Theatre to recruit oldsters who primarily fill backstage capacities such as costuming and prop making. Waterloo Iowa's Community Playhouse earned a $1,000 grant from the Iowa Arts Council to fund a 1978-1979 tour project, "Production for seniors," which will play daytime performances at congregate centers for seniors within 100 miles of Waterloo. The performances include standard work from the theatre's regular season.

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*Those groups designated as professional or semi-professional are so identified solely because they state or imply that they should be so designated. The authors of this report have neither the inclination to settle the old question of the proper definition of professionalism nor sufficient information to confidently categorize all these groups should a definition be agreed upon.

Finally, The Barn Theatre of Topeka, Kansas, developed a special production, "The Theatre Looks at Aging, " and then formed six companies of actors over fifty years of age who would be ready to perform this bill of one-act comedies for any club or community organization upon request. The Barn Theatre announced preview performances of the production so that it could be viewed by booking officers of suitable organizations would be limited to dramatic royalties.

Professional and semi-professional theatres have entered the field of senior adult theatre in a variety of ways, some mounting senior companies, some performing for seniors, and some providing workshop programs. In 1977, Back Alley Theatre of Washington, D.C. developed the Society for the Artistic Growth of the Elderly (SAGE) a cross-generational group which, like all Back Alley Theatre offshoots, aimed at several goals, including training seniors for "a second career in the arts." SAGE involved seniors in theatre classes, a cross-generational performing group, and regular Back Alley production, notably Miguel Pinero's *Midnight Moon at the Greasy Spoon*, in which the 14 person cast comprised the cross-generational SAGE company.

In Evanston, Illinois, the North Light Repertory Company offered a series of creative drama workshops for professional workers with the elderly. Led by Anne Thurman of Northwestern, this program promised to teach workers how to build self-esteem and communication skills for the elderly through CD. In Detroit, the Attic Theatre Project taught creative drama to seniors under the auspices of the Detroit Council for the Arts. Later, the senior participants performed "The Oldsters Mime Show" as part of the 1978 Michigan Theatre Association Festival.

Performing for the elderly is the primary activity of Theatre for Older People, a division of one of the best established Off Off-Broadway companies, the Joseph Jefferson Theatre Company. Based in the Little Church Around the Corner, and operating under an Equity Showcase contract, TOP produces mostly original plays which address problems and experiences of aging, and presents them both in its home theatre and in congregate centers throughout the New York area. After the performances, the elderly audiences are encouraged to discuss issues raised by the plays. TOP casts professional actors of all ages according to the requirements of the script.

However, the dominant pattern for professional theatres appears to be the straightforward formation of a company of seniors, usually with little or no previous theatre experience, which the parent company trains toward becoming a permanent, usually touring, performing company.

In Santa Cruz, California, the Bear Republic Theatre, a self-described alternative-collective theatre, used CETA funds to develop a special summer season production, Wrinkles, based on life experiences gleaned from workshop sessions with its fourteen member senior cast.

In 1978, Seattle's Hard Times Theater, launched Crazy Quilt, a company of seven over-fifty performers which tours original work. And in New York City, the Double Image Theatre's Seasoned Citizens Workshop tours congregate centers doing creative drama work under the leadership of Claire Michaels, who has established herself as one of the few creative drama specialists widely known for work with seniors.

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In 1978, Minnesota's Guthrie Theater produced Flashbacks, an oral history project performed by seniors and designed to be part of the Guthries regular touring operation, Metro Tours. Another major company, Actors Theatre of Louisville, started its Senior Players in the 1977-78 season and continues it during the current season. Senior Players tours group created work to schools and congregate centers in Kentucky, Indiana, and Ohio.

Perhaps the best known senior company in the country is Chicago's Free Street Too, a four-year old offshoot of the Free Street Theatre. Street Too is a group of seniors, lead by younger members of Free Street Theatre, which tours a group created production, To Life, based on the life experiences of of the members. The reputation of Free Street Too is such that it was able to demand in 1978 a daily performance fee of $500 plus travel and per diem expenses for its company of fifteen, as well as to stipulate that admission to its tour programs must be free (a requirement of its extensive public funding). Free Street Too is generally the most wanted company at Eastern conventions and conferences concerning arts and the aging.

The relative success of Free Street Too and other senior groups with roots in extant theatre companies suggests that the theatrical continuity and support of the original company is a particularly good base for senior theatre work. As we shall explore later, there is also the obverse possibility that senior adult activities have proven a stabilizing force for some theatre groups in that they can bring in revenues from government agencies or foundations interested in the aging and thus strengthen the basic financial foundations which, for almost all ongoing theatre groups are a constant source of worry.

Senior Adult Theatre Activities Sponsored by Universities and Colleges

Our limited reports suggest that institutions of higher education are becoming active in senior adult theatre in three ways: by sponsoring senior performing groups; by offering courses and workshops in senior adult theatre and related fields; and by pursuing and publishing research, (often as a byproduct of the first two functions). We shall deal with the first two functions here and with the last later in the report.

It is evident that much university theatre production work, reported and unreported involves seniors in one way or another. It is worth noting here that the academic community has yet to produce the amount of published information that its rising rate of activity in this area would seem to portend. It may well be that much of the production and performance activity involving seniors is being carried out in such an informal manner that the records and procedures which preceed scholarly reporting and, indeed, make it possible, are not being followed, thus minimizing published materials.

In conjunction with the Maine Committee on Aging and the Maine Council for Humanities and Public Policy, the University of Maine mounted a senior adult reader's theatre production developed from the cast's recollections and inspired, according to the leadership of the project, by Chicago's Free Street Too. This production was performed at least twelve times, including a performance at the Eastern Communication Association in Boston in March, 1978.

At the University of Missouri-Rolla, the Department of Humanities, supported by the Missouri Committee for the Humanities, produced a series of short plays designed to prompt issue exploration among audiences of retirees, gerontology professionals, and residents of retirement homes.

At the University of Oregon in Eugene, The One Nighters, a senior group of women over 55, which began in 1973, performs one-act plays, skits, and sing-alongs at local senior centers and theatre conferences. In North Carolina, Methodist College's Green and Gold Masque-Keys club has also mounted one-act plays and variety performances for senior centers. And in 1977, Oakton Community College of the Skokie, Illinois area, developted Acting Up, an improvisational theatre troupe of over 60 actors augmented by ordinary college students. Acting Up, which tours retirement communities and schools, is another company which freely acknowledges being inspired by Free Street Too.

But the best known college sponsored group is probably the Autumn Players, a now defunct, but recently very active and successful group sponsored by Catonsville Community College. This suburban Baltimore group which has been the subject of a masters thesis written at the Pennsylvania State University,[1] was expressly designed by its director, Paul Boxell, of the Community College faculty, to do traditional theatre on a touring basis. The Autumn Players not only toured successfully to nutrition centers and nursing homes for several seasons, but eventually produced a series of educational video-tapes called "Survival in the Market Place" under a grant from the Office of Education, DHEW.

Other college and university efforts have been directed toward developing courses and mounting workshops, either for seniors themselves or for those who work with them.

Courses designed for senior adults have been offered at such institutions as Virginia Commonwealth University ("Theatre Arts for Older Americans"), Dakota Wesleyan University ("Gray Stage: A Look at Aging Through Drama") and the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, which offered creative drama as part of its elder-hostal program.

Other institutions are concentrating on programs which prepare professionals already working in gerontology or current students who might use theatre skills to enter new areas of service to the elderly. In addition to its course in theatre for the old, Virginia Commonwealth offers "Principles and Techniques of Applied Theatre," a course exploring the use of theatre techniques in non-traditional environments including nursing homes and day centers for the elderly. Aided by funds from the National Endowment for the Arts, the New School for Social Research offers studio workshops in drama and dance (as well as fine arts) to teachers enrolled in its Creative Arts Center for Older Adults. Although seniors are invited to participate in this program, it is primarily designed for senior center arts directors and artist teachers who work in such centers.

At Billings, Montana, Theatre Department Chairman Victoria Tait has developed a series of courses including "Creative Approaches to Leisure Time of the Elderly," and "Theatre Therapy," both of which are aimed at workers with senior center and nursing home populations and emphasize improvisational techniques. On the other side of the continent, at the College of Notre Dame of Maryland, Isabel Burger, long-time children's theatre specialist now offers leadership training in "Creative Drama and Aging." The ten-week series of seminar meetings involves morning sessions in which prospective senior adult drama leads meet with Ms. Burger's "Dynamic Living in Retirement" students, seniors involved largely in creative drama and afternoon sessions in which leaders investigate techniques by themselves.

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[1] Richard W. Fallon, "Ageless Theatre: Drama with the Senior Adult." University Park: The Pennsylvania State University, 1975. (Unpublished master's thesis.)

At San Diego State University, a three year grant from the California Department of Health was used to finance "Theatre Games" courses for nursing home recreation directors from 1975 to 1978. During the first year of the program, a producing group of elderly actors was formed, but the emphasis turned to training gerontology workers in the second and third years.

The logical conclusions of these tentative training efforts would be the creation of a formalized career training program in senior adult theatre. While such a program has not yet appeared, one institution, California State College of Pennsylvania, now claims to offer the first comprehensive program for training undergraduates to use the arts in social services. Called the BA in Arts in Human Services, this program is offered through the combined efforts of the Departments of Art, Music, and Theatre. As of November, 1978, it had enrolled 10 undergraduate majors. It is not sure, however, that graduates from this program will be especially proficient in providing theatre services for senior adults, because the student is required to take only six credits in the area of theatre and three of those required credits might be in puppetry or children's theatre.

Nevertheless, it may be assumed that many more institutions will enter the lists with courses and whole programs in senior adult theatre, or at least, theatre for special populations, as soon as it becomes apparent that there is indeed a career track for which to prepare students.

Senior Adult Theatre in Residential Communities

Were one to hypothesize concerning the incidence of senior adult theatre groups, one would naturally include in one's speculations groups which might develop in living centers for the elderly, retirement homes, nursing homes, and the like. And such a hypothesis would prove correct--ten of the reporting groups were based in such an environment. However, examination of those reports leads one to the conclusion that theatre groups rising in such an atmosphere are not particularly strong--not as dynamic, let us say, as some of the groups that have arisen from extant theatre organizations.

As part of the 90th Anniversary celebration for its parent organization, the National Benevolent Association, residents of the Lenoir Memorial Home, Columbia, Missouri, mounted in 1977 a production based on life experiences of the group. As guest director, they hired Patrick Henry, founder of Chicago's Free Street Too. However, the report of the Lenoir Theatre Workshop indicated no basic structure by which subsequent productions would be mounted in the absence of their guest director.

In a low income senior citizen home in Annandale, Virginia, the leader of the Evergreen Players manages to mount a skit or playlet every three or four months, but bewails the lack of experienced leadership that might make the program vital. Her appeals to local service agencies for a leadership budget have failed to gain assistance. A Jewish Home for the Aged in Detroit reports that the only failure among six arts residencies sponsored by the State Council for the Arts was the theatre program. Again the problem was attributed to the lack of appropriate leadership.

Some retirement communities plug along by setting very low goals. One California mobile home park senior group meets once a month and limits its work to variety--sing alongs, skits, etc. Another similar group in California attempts occasional one-act plays to supplement its variety format, but has trouble finding material, a probable sign of the absence of competent leadership.

Several senior communities have given rise to groups that specialize in play·reading. Such a group is the unnamed theatre club of San Antonio Gardens of Pamona, California. Another is in Thirty-Thirty Park, of Bridgeport, Connecticut. These groups apparently find that play reading is more within their grasp than more ambitious activities liked staged production.

But among retirement community theatres is probably the longest-lived senior adult theatre program in the nation, the Youngtown Players of Youngtown, Arizona, founded in 1959 by Dina Reese Evans Shaw as the first theatre of retirees for retirees, and still running, (though a broken hip at least temporarily removed Ms. Shaw from the helm in 1978). As of June 1978, the Youngtown Players had done 28 productions, usually two one-act plays. However, perhaps because of aging or tiring leadership, the Players report indicates that membership and the drive to produce was beginning to shrink in 1978.

Leadership problems will be discussed later in this report. But it is unavoidable to point out here that the problems of retirement communities in theatre production seem to stem largely from the failure to bring in or maintain the kind of leadership that extant theatres obviously can provide to the senior theatre groups which are their offspring.

Senior Adult Theatre Sponsored by Civic and Social Organizations

Some dozen groups reporting are sponsored by local organizations devoted either to the arts and recreation or to serving the elderly in terms of day services. In Boston, the Office of Cultural Affairs operates Elderarts, a multi-art program whose theatre activities include workshops, theatre going, and a modest senior performing group called Age on Stage.

The Hartford Jewish Community Center's started Center Stage in 1977, and the group of seniors from 58 to 75 continues to produce and tour one-act plays in 1979. The Jewish Community Center of Metropolitan Washington, launched its Vintage Years Theatre Workshop with four members in 1977; in 1978, the workshop terminated with 35 members--funds had run out.

In St. Louis, the Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens operates Arts and the Elderly, an omnibus arts program in which fourteen instructors service 19 senior arts centers. Drama and dance workshops meet at several of the centers and students perform their own plays. In Kingsport, Tennessee in late 1977, the Park and Recreation Department produced the premiere of Evening Star by Howard Richardson (Dark of the Moon) and Frances Goforth. Evening Star, a full length play about the residents of a home for retired actors, drew much attention to the senior community of Kingsport, especially the cast members, but single productions do not necessarily lead seniors into long-term theatre activity.

Nutrition projects are sometimes the springboard for dramatic activities. In New Haven in 1977, the New Dimension Theatre Company was started by VISTA workers for the South Central Connecticut Elderly Nutrition Project. Delaware's Indian River Senior Center began its first theatrical activities in response to a request from Community Action for a nutrition program. And in Altoona, Pennsylvania, the Meals on Wheels organization cooperated with Penn State University extension programmers by allowing an improvisational theatre workshop to be located in its congregate meal center. After the experimental workshop ended, the seniors involved continued to perform on their own, touring to other senior meal sites.

Oregon's Salem Family Theatre, White Plains, New York's Senior Drama Club, The Seasoned Players of Prince George's County, Maryland, and the Senior Adult Theatre Interest Group of Fresno, California, are all offshoots of senior citizens clubs and centers.

Summary

To discuss the basic organizational patterns of senior adult theatres is to say very little about them in terms of what they do, how they do it, and what purposes they pursue. Those questions will be addressed in the pages to follow.

However, certain conclusions can be drawn even from such superficial considerations. First, senior adult theatre groups are almost always parented by previously existing organizations. In some instances this may reflect a certain reluctance of older persons to organize themselves or experiment with new forms of activity. On the other hand, it may merely reflect the fact that most Americans attain old age without having seriously encountered the art of theatre. It is certainly established that seniors tend to maintain in retirement years the cultural habits they had learned when younger.[1]

We may also theorize, however, that already existing organizations provide the possibilities for delivering leadership to older theatre groups, especially young leadership. Although it is by no means clear that senior adults absolutely need younger leaders in theatre activities, it is perhaps not coincidental that the reporting groups reporting the most trouble among the groups considered in this section are those arising in senior residences where, perhaps, they are most likely to depend upon other seniors for leadership.

In the pages to follow, we shall consider specific aspects of senior adult theatre as it is apparently being practiced: its objectives, its working principles and techniques, and key variables which seem to influence its development. In these sections, we shall be able to draw more conclusions, even though the information which we are examining is fragmentary, idiosyncratic, and variously expressed.

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[1] Gordon F. Stribe, "Retirement Roles and Activities: Back-Ground Issues." White House Conference on Aging, February 1971. ERIC Document #057 325.

II. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF SENIOR ADULT THEATRE GROUPS

It goes without saying that at the heart of most theatre activity of all kinds is pleasure--the pleasure of doing theatre and the pleasure of seeing it. We may assume, therefore, that most of the participants in the reporting senior adult theatre groups belong because of the joy it brings them. However, as in every other field of human endeavor, participants in theatre tend to have more than one motive for involvement. In this section we shall examine the motives which are explicitly stated by reporting groups or which can be inferred from their reports. These motives are important for a number of reasons.

First, motives are often stated as part of the rationale by which funds are sought. Second, motives may dictate the choice of theatre strategies pursued. Third, motives suggest the way that the theatre participants think about themselves and their involvement.

In this section we shall consider five different general objectives that can e derived from the reports examined: therapy, issue exploration, cross generational contact, professional training, and entertaining audiences.

Therapy

The therapeutic aspects of senior adult theatre are frequently cited by theatre professionals seeking to encourage theatre activities for the elderly. Theatre is credited with developing self-confidence, increasing communication skills, overcoming isolation, and preserving physical conditions. However, only four of the reports received specifically pointed to therapy as a primary objective of the theatre activity.

The Coordinator of the Evansville Community Players reports that she sees her program as a "group therapy type of thing," but does not say whether her senior participatns see it the same way. In Amherst, Massachusetts, drama therapist, Rickey Mazor has established a "drama therapy" program at the adult day center. She describes her participants as "over 65 years of age and . . . suffering from a variety of emotional and physical disabilities associated with aging."

In Hartford, Connecticut, the Institute for Movement Exploration gives creative movement classes to older persons with specific therapeutic objectives in the areas of self-esteem, fitness, and interaction. These classes are led by certified dance therapists.

At Hunter College, working under Professor Milton Polsky in the Brookdale Drama Project, Mary Burnstein describes her socio-drama group work as aimed at redirecting the anxieties of the elderly. All students working as leaders in the Brookdale Project take therapy courses and consult with the medical staff of the Brookdale Center for Aging.

In this admittedly small sample, we can see that the objectives of therapy are stated by professionals working with the elderly, not the elderly themselves. The amount of senior adult theatre pursuing therapeutic objectives may depend largely on the numbers of dance or drama therapists who enter the field. In their absence, seniors involved in theatre activities will no doubt receive certain therapeutic benefits, but only as a fortuitous byproduct of a pastime pursued for its own sake.

Issue Exploration

There is a fine line between therapy and the investigation of issues relating to society and one's place in it. Indeed, such investigation carried out with vigor and honesty may have a therapeutic effect. However, in the language of the reports examined, it is clear that some groups and individuals consider the exploration of issues and the raising of consciousness regarding social questions to be an intellectual activity of value to healthy adults who may suffer from no ills that would seem to call for therapeutic measures.

At least ten groups approach their work with specific intent to illuminate issues through performance, discussion, or both. Naturally, the most important issue is aging itself. Topeka's Barn Players, Maine's Old Age: Tradition Shelved or Shared?, San Francisco's Tale Spinners, and Skokie's Acting Up troupe all proposed to examine and illuminate aging, the latter two explicitly reporting that their projects were aimed at destroying the "myths" of aging.

Some groups may be funded with the specific obligation to investigate issues or inform audiences. The Indian River Senior Center went into theatre because it was asked by Community Action to stage a play about nutrition, a standard educational problem concerning the elderly. The University of Missouri-Rolla received its funds from the Missouri Committee on the Humanities with the proviso that performances would be followed by panel discussions in which the sponsored play would be related to "humanistic social issues."

New Haven's New Dimension Theatre Company, which began as a nutrition project, moved into media production with an educational video-tape project designed to inform seniors concerning their Medicare rights. During their latter seasons the Autumn Players also earned funding by making a series of tapes designed to educate seniors about consumerism.

Theatre purists may question the justification of theatre activities by didactic purposes. On the other hand, the investigation of issues and the stimulation of audiences allow the inference that seniors involved in theatre are functioning, responsible adults. At any rate, it seems evident that many senior groups are likely to see an opportunity or responsibility to use theatre besides enjoying it.

Cross Generational Contact

A standard topic concerning the aging is their frequent isolation from childhood and youth and the possible subsequent loss of affect. Some groups, whether or not they discuss the topic explicitly, do make specific provisions for bringing their seniors together with young people, whether as co-workers or through performer-audience contact.

Free Street Too has only elderly persons among its performers--its leaders are youngish Free Street Company members--but its stated goal, which it pursues through its wide touring to parks, playgrounds, and the like, is "cross-generational communication."

Back Alley Theatre, on the other hand, designed its senior group, SAGE, to be cross-generational with the idea that such a concept would "do much toward reducing agism."

On Long Island, an amateur group with similar goals was started at Nassau County's Pearce Senior Citizens Center, where Dr. Grace Stainstreet founded a drama workshop composed of ten seniors and ten children aged eight to fourteen. And at the University of Texas, a 1978 children's theatre production of Pinocchio was cast with seniors up to eighty as well as college students with the specific purpose, according to its director, Joyce Selber, of "erasing generational divisions and imposed isolation."

Although Louisville's Senior Players remain an all senior performing group, it has produced a play for children and travels to schools as well as other tour sites.

It should be no surprise that there is a connection between senior theatre groups and young people, particularly children. Among the theatre professionals who have been drawn to work with seniors there will be found a large percentage of persons experienced in children's theatre. This is partly because senior theatre seems naturally suited to the creative drama techniques which such people have developed (and the prevalence of which will be discussed below). It may also be because children's theatre specialists may be considered to be more concerned with the process of inducing students (of whatever age) into theatre activity, rather than in achieving a polished product. (No derogation is intended here, of course.) Whatever the case, it should be anticipated that persons with such backgrounds will be especially active in senior adult theatre in the future, thus making companies combining seniors and children fairly common.

Professional Training

It sounds anomalous to talk about the aged and professional training in the same breath, and, indeed, one will not find many groups that claim to train seniors for theatre careers. However, Back Alley's SAGE project listed first among its several objectives the intention "to train seniors for a second career in the arts." SAGE was launched on CETA funding. Another CETA funded organization involved with the professional training of senior performers is Detroit's Attic Theatre, which apparently trains the members of its "Oldster Mime Show" for performance in television commercials and other professional markets.

This leads to a more important observation concerning the objective of professional training: a large number of senior adult theatre projects have been supported under the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act. Reporting groups have not generally specified the terms of their CETA contracts. It remains, therefore, a question for further investigation whether many of these groups have promised or implied the promise to somehow prepare seniors for new careers in theatre arts.

Entertaining Audiences and Touring

Ordinarily, one assumes that theatre is for audiences. However, any theatre that tends to be process oriented need not necessarily address an audience. Indeed, some senior groups report quite explicitly that they either do not wish to or are unable to perform before audiences. The Rhode Island Arts Council sponsors a program, in which creative drama specialists work at hospitals, day care and senior centers, reports that the only audiences are accidental--nurses and aides that wander through workshop spaces. Modesto's Akamai Players state quite specifically that they perform only for themselves, prompting the site visitor to theorize that the group felt defensive about the quality of its one-act plays and variety shows and did not wish to have that quality generally displayed.

This deemphasis of the audience may be attributed in part to the attitude of some creative drama specialists to whom the existence of an audience is often considered to be a minor matter, if not, indeed, anathema. As long as creative drama techniques have an important place in theatre for senior adults, it must be anticipated that some group leaders will question the necessity or adviseability of performing before audiences.

These considerations only make it more notable, therefore, that most senior adult theatre groups are very eager to perform before audiences. The clearest indication of this is the unusual prevalence of touring. Whereas touring has no place in the planning of most college, community, high school or professional theatre productions, it is so common among senior adult theatre projects as to approach being the norm.

Every kind of senior theatre groups has been represented among touring groups; and most of those groups which may be called outstanding or very well known have toured. (That is, of course, one reason why they are well known.)

Among professionally supported companies, Free Street Too, Louisville's Senior Players, and the Guthrie's senior production, Flashbacks, were primarily organized as touring operations. The best known college organization, the Autumn Players, made their primary impact by touring to nutrition centers. Such community groups as the Senior Stars, the New Wrinkle Theatre, and M'Turing Company (whose name establishes the basic rationale of the company as a traveling group), play schools, nursing homes and clubs. Invited by hosts intrigued by the idea of theatre performers in their sixties, seventies, and eighties, many amateur companies have traveled rather widely. Oregon's Theatre of Feast has visited Texas, California, Idaho, and Washington. Perhaps the most unusual touring itinerary belongs to Hawaii's Pohai Nani Players, a retirement residence group which traveled to the continent in 1971 to play retirement communities owned by its home corporation, Pacific Homes Corporation, in Phoenix, Los Angeles, San Diego, and other towns. (Pohai Nani shares with other companies the belief that it is the oldest non-professional senior adult theatre touring group. Due to the lack of historical research in senior adult theatre, such claims can't be verified at this time.)

The prevalence of touring is obviously a function of several factors. First, much of the potential audience for senior theatre faces difficulty in going to a play. Nursing home and congregate center audiences lack the mobility of the general audience, so the senior adult theatre company goes to them.

Second, senior adult theatre is generally easily adapted to touring. Most senior companies do very little in the way of scenic construction and lighting; they lack the expertise, and their home bases--if they have any--generally lack appropriate space and equipment for scenery construction. Add to these factors the creative drama influence that so pervades senior adult theatre, and it is obvious that lightness and simplicity will characterize production and make touring a relatively easy task. Thus, The Theatre for Senior Performers of Northridge, California, reports that it tours one-act plays using "three screens, a table and two chairs for scenery." And in the Philadelphia suburbs, the Third Age Theatre carries a few portable screens and bags of props in the back of a station wagon, adding to that the furniture found at the congregate centers at which it plays to set the stage for its afternoon theatre productions.

Finally, it is well to mention a negative factor promoting touring. Many senior adult programs report that they simply are unable to find approrpiate home bases for theatre production. Thus, the road becomes the difference between activity and inactivity.

Summary

By direct statement or implication, senior adult theatre groups claim various purposes including therapy, the exploration of social issues, consciousness raising, cross-generational contact, even professional training. However, the prevalence of touring among senior adult companies suggests that the dominant purpose that seniors pursue in their theatre activity is the age old joy of performing in front of an appreciative audience. True, there is a definite social contribution to be made by visiting nursing homes or performing informative material in front of school children. But the leaders who report that seniors who at first were content to perform or do exercises only for their own benefit eventually decide they want to get in front of an audience to attest to the fact that many seniors find in theatre exactly what everybody else finds in it: the thrill of reaching an audience and receiving its applause.

III. WORKING PRINCIPLES AND TECHNIQUES PRACTICED IN SENIOR ADULT THEATRE

An examination of the reports submitted confirms a common assumption about any category of people involved in theatre production: most seniors and senior groups operate on the premise that theatre means standard production. That is, they mount or indicate that they wish they could mount productions in which actors who have memorized their lines performed published plays in costume in front of scenery for audiences in an auditorium. Not only are many of the groups doing that, but others indicate that they would do so if they could.

Having said this, however, we will now examine a number of variations on standard production format that appear with significant frequency among the reports, probably, indeed, with greater frequency than one would expect from a similar number of reports from other kinds of theatre groups, say professional companies, university theatres, or ordinary community theatres.

These variations include script-in-hand play reading, variety, oral history presentations, original plays, and creative and improvisational drama.

Play Reading

For a number of obvious reasons, script-in-hand play reading is either a primary or secondary approach among senior groups. From Manlius, New York, the drama specialist of the Parks and Recreation Department reports that her group relies on script-in-hand readings because her members have "little time or inclination for memorizing, which is also very difficult at this stage of life."

Although several researchers have questioned the commonplace that seniors have inordinate difficulty learning lines, this belief informs much of senior adult theatre practice and partly explains the commonness of reader's theatre.

In California's San Antonio Gardens, the play reading group, according to its leader, Marie Fischer Wing, employs its readings as simply as a "class refresher," and therefore does nothing for discreet audiences. Bridgeport, Connecticut's Thirty-Thirty Park group numbers both readers and audience among its membership. All the actual readers are women, the men having declined to participate beyond listening. The Thirty-Thirty group reports that vision is sometimes a problem, implying that the lack of easily accessible large-type scripts should be addressed if reader's theatre is to become a truly valuable mode for senior adult groups. Play publisher's print formats are generally too cramped for failing eyes, and few senior groups have either the clerical support or the equipment required to reproduce scripts in large type format.

Some groups use reader's theatre without relying on it. Cambridge's New Wrinkle Theatre combines reader's theatre and standard acting in the same touring program. Other theatre groups have found it possible to begin as readers groups and then move into standard performance after their personnel had gained confidence. The Youngtown Players, who began script-in-hand in 1959 has since done many standard productions. And the Hawthorne Players of Leesburg, Florida, report that a year after their organization as a readers group in 1974, the acquisition of a regular stage space prompted their metamorphosis into a standard production group.

It seems likely that reader's theatre will continue to be a common mode. Seniors (and their leaders) are often afraid to memorize; reader's theatre seems to imply a lower (and less pressure-laden) goal of performance; and it even allows (as the Thirty-Thirty Park group notes) older performers to sit throughout a performance without spoiling it.

Variety

As in the case of playreading, the instance of variety performance--skits, specialty acts, sing-alongs, etc.--seems to be higher among senior adult theatre groups than in other sorts of theatres. Some groups rely primarily on this sort of performing. Saturday Night Social, the program of San Mateo, California, mobile home subdivision, produces one variety show per month, featuring a sing-along, skits, slide shows, dancing, and live music. The Seasoned Players of Prince George's County, Maryland, organizes its production around variety themes such as "An Old Tyme Vaudeville Show," or "A Hawaiian Wedding." And the Senior Center Players of Newark, Delaware, produce an annual two-act musical/comedy variety show based on a nostalgic theme which they tour to senior centers, hospitals, and nursing homes. Their current original production is entitled, On the Boardwalk in Atlantic City.

Other groups, Project Joy of Spokane, Washington, for example, produce shows that include both variety and dramatic segments. Project Joy is unusual in that it has organized its participants into specialized sub-companies, some of which are primarily theatrical, some musical. These companies rehearse on their own schedules and fan out through the Spokane area to entertain at various clubs, nursing homes, and churches. Among Project Joy's theatrical divisions are the Three Joys, who combine music, poetry, and puppetry, and the Drama Group, which engages in reader's theatre and creative drama.

The programs conducted by the Westminster Mall Senior Center of Providence precede and follow an original historical script developed by director, Brad Smoker, with musical selections from Gilbert and Sullivan or pop songs. In Fort Washington, Pennsylvania, the Third Age Theatre inserts musical solos between the original one-act plays that form the core of its production.

Several reasons for the common use of variety materials are easily discernable. First, it allows more people to appear at least momentarily in the limelight. Not only is it unnecessary to be limited by the requirements of a play script, but seniors can enjoy a few moments of featured turn by preparing a single number rather than going through the trouble of rehearsing an entire play.

It is probably also a value of variety that the audience's (at least the older audience's) feelings of nostalgia are easily reached through the use of popular songs from their youth.

And variety allows senior groups to exploit their capacities and experience. Whereas many a group may number among its membership few with any training or experience in acting, it may contain many more who have some musical performance background, not to mention people who can do card tricks, clown, or perform ethnic dances. Furthermore, the variety approach allows seniors to build upon vaudeville and other social models of their earlier years.

Finally, it must be said that there is a certain unpretentiousness to the variety approach which may be less threatening to some older groups than the challenge of doing a play, which may seem to suggest higher artistic aspirations.

Oral History

It is only to be expected that senior adult theatre groups should make good use of the one resource in which their members are richer than the members of other theatres. Partly because drawing upon memories of the past confirms the value of their participants' lives, partly because creative drama technique stresses developing story telling abilities through the use of memories and often uses memory as a key to relaxation and concentration, partly because oral history productions can be offered to school audiences as educational experiences, a number of groups have centered their production work around company-developed oral history productions.

The most successful of these groups to date is Free Street Too. Encouraged by leaders who place great value on the members' memories, Free Street Too presents a highly theatrical platform performance in which seniors recreate personal and public experiences which they have honed into a memorized performance. Patrick Henry, director of the parent company, has taken this technique elsewhere, developing oral history theatre as a guest director working with seniors.

Other groups using the oral history approach include Antioch College's Baltimore Theatre Project, the University of Maine's project (the report of which acknowledges the influence of Free Street Too); Rutgers University's Taking the Arts to the People; a City of Baltimore Commission on Aging and Retirement Education project entitled "The Last Days of the Old World;" and professionally based projects like the Guthrie Theatre's Flashbacks, and the Actors Playhouse's Senior Players.

There seems every good reason why the oral history approach should continue to inform senior theatre production, whether the style of that production is traditional performance, reader's theatres, or creative drama.

Original Play Development

No aspect of senior adult theatre is more striking than the number of groups that report concentrating a significant amount of their effort on doing plays written by their members or premiering plays written in their community. In a sense, this should be heartening to those who believe the theatre thrives on its encouragement of the playwright. However, it is by no means certain that the consequences of this trend will always be good for senior adult theatre.

At least a quarter of the reports received indicated that the production of original scripts is an important, if not the main effort of the reporting group. Considering the fragmentary and variable nature of the reports, it must be assumed that even more groups are doing original material. It may well be that senior adult theatre tends more to original work than other theatres which, outside of the New York commercial stage, tend to rely primarily on established material.

Numerous reasons may be cited for the common practice of doing new plays. First, new play production is an obvious possible offshoot of the interest in oral history. Companies like Free Street Too are in the business of building original scripts out of reminiscence. Second, the use of creative drama techniques provides a workshop for script development. The report of the Senior Stars of Minneapolis' Illusion Theatre cites the creative drama techniques of Viola Spolin and Paul Sills as a contributing factor in their development of original scripts.

For the Tale Spinners of San Francisco, the group objective of investigating and destroying the myths of aging pushed them to developing scripts that would exploit the aging experiences of their particular audiences. Other groups such as the Second Horizon Players of Colorado Springs report that they undertook playwriting because "plays written solely for actors over fifty-five are rarities." Whether or not this assumption is correct, it is a common one and indicates that many groups have only tenuous connections to the avenues of communication by which theatre practicioners ordinarily inform themselves of the availability of good material.

In other projects, such as the Brookdale Drama Project or the Third Age Theatre of Ambler, Pennsylvania, workshops or playwriting lessons are offered to seniors, naturally leading to the possibility that the group may stage the resulting plays. The Bear Republic Theater's CETA contract included funds to pay a writer as workshop leader; this led directly to the writer's being assigned the task of producing a new script for performance by seniors. Such workshops may reflect the interest of aging agencies in encouraging what they call "reality orientation" through creative writing.

Add to these factors the possibilities that senior groups are generally unconcerned with earning money at the box office and, due to a lack of general theatre background, may have little sense of the difficulty of playwriting or what a sound script should be like, and it is easy to see why new play production is so common.

However, several questions should be raised. First, it is possible that an easy assumption that new plays are as appropriate as tested pieces may lead some groups to doing scripts that cannot serve as the basis for strong theatre production. An examination of numerous plays written in two senior theatre workshops indicates that most of the writers had not mastered the most basic ideas of story structure, suspense, and climax. Nevertheless, some of these plays were being performed. This is not to suggest that creativity ought to be fettered. But the combination of inexperienced actors and weak scripts cannot go far to producing good theatre. It may be said that seniors will never be subjected to the vigorous criticism that other theatre groups may face. This does not mean that senior adult groups will not suffer if their standards of performance are low. People may indulge seniors by stifling criticism, but they are unlikely to support really weak theatre by attendance. At the very least, it is obvious that sound, professionally written material that truly suits senior performers should be made readily accessible to them so that they do not have to produce weak scripts by default.

Creative Drama and Improvisational Techniques

The preceding pages have already made it evident that the techniques of creative drama (or improvisational drama if you prefer) are a strong force in the conduct of senior adult theatre. Easily fifty percent of the reports received state or allow the inference that these techniques at least play a part in day-to-day activities if they do not set the tone of actual performances. Such professionally based groups as Free Street Too and Senior Players of Louisville, train their inexperienced seniors largely with creative drama techniques. Wherever, in fact, there is professional leadership, creative drama techniques seem to abound. Those groups which do not mention them tend to be groups of seniors who have been left largely to their own devices for planning and leadership or who have found their leaders among community theatre people (although some of those persons use creative drama techniques too).

Most noticeable is the fact that a large number of persons who may be said to form the nucleus of a national cadre of senior adult theatre leadership tend to practice these techniques. Milton Polsky of the Brookdale Drama Project, Claire Michaels, consultant in Geriadrama (her own coined word), Shirley Harbin of the Detroit Metropolitan Theatre Council, Isabel Berger of Maryland's College of Notre Dame, whose workshops have influenced other teachers of senior theatre, and university people like Tom Behm of Theatre for Young People, University of North Carolina, Greensboro and Victoria Tait of Eastern Montana College all emphasize these techniques. Many of these people come from children's theatre, which would explain their preferences, but there are other logical reasons for using creative drama techniques.

Some reporters point out that creative or improvisational work avoids the problems of memorization or even script reading; others suggest that the theatre games involved in creative drama develop communication skills that are often deteriorating among the elderly. Still others point out that creative drama can lead participants to investigate in dramatic terms topics--illness, death, loneliness, etc.--which may weigh heavily on their souls but find neither expression nor cathartic release in conventional drama activity.

In a more practical vein, it must be pointed out that the creative drama approach avoids some of the mundane problems often associated with senior adult theatre, its environments, and its resources: lack of proper stage facilities, inability to construct scenery, props, or costumes, even the lack of funds for proper scripts. These cease to be problems with the improvisational approach.

All considered, therefore, creative drama should continue to be a leading motif of senior adult theatre. If the professionally qualified people associated with senior adult groups continue to come from sources such as the Isabel Berger workshops or the Brookdale Drama Program, we may assume that creative drama may become even more ubiquitous, if not as a technique of performance before audiences, at least as a basis for the induction and training of participants.

IV. A SPECIAL NOTE ON THEATRE ATTENDANCE PROGRAMS

The thrust of this report is active participation by senior adults in theatre activities. Most of the reports received address that topic. However, a few address the question of involving seniors not as active practicioners but as audience. Because no attempt has been made to survey the many organizations which might be logically expected to offer discounted or free tickets to seniors--university theatres, community theatres, regional professional companies--this report can offer no estimate of the prevalence of the practice.

However, it is fair to say that even a minimal effort to collect such information would provide many positive instances. Many colleges and universities, for example, are offering free or low cost tickets to the elderly. Penn State University, the University of Oregon, the University of Delaware, the University of Missouri at Kansas City are just a few examples. The University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg Center began cooperation with the Ambler Third Age Theatre by offering discount tickets; shortly thereafter, it made the tickets completely free.

Civic and local government organizations sometimes arrange such services. The Boston Elderarts Program arranged twenty-five cent senior matinees with the Boston Arts Group. In Detroit, the Recreation Department arranges 3,000 discounted tickets per annum by which seniors in recreation centers attend professional theatre in Detroit. In Washington, D.C., the Psychiatric Institute Foundation buys tickets and transports isolated seniors from their homes to the city's major professional theatres, the Arena, the Kennedy Center, etc.

In Omaha, the Magic Theatre, best known for its playwright in residence, Megan Terry, offers special performances for "exceptional audiences" and admits seniors to any performance for fifty cents. In Jackson, Mississippi, the New State Theatre provides free tickets, transportation, and after-performance seminars for seniors.

Thus, though it is outside the scope of this report to draw conclusions concerning theatre attendance programs, it is fair to say that they are probably spreading as managements become more conscious of the rising demands of senior adults for a place in their planning.

However, it must be pointed out that even such modest efforts as ticket programs for the elderly will not proceed inevitably, with or without encouragement. From Whittier, California, Rio Hondo College reports that whereas it had been its policy to admit all seniors to theatre productions free of charge, the advent of Proposition Thirteen has forced the theatre program to charge seniors for admission, although at a discounted rate. A decline in senior attendance has already been observed.

V. KEY VARIABLES IN SENIOR ADULT THEATRE

Apart from basic objectives and approaches to theatre, a number of factors influence the development of senior adult theatre groups just as they would any other theatres. The reports received indicate that a number of specific variables should be discussed. In the order of discussion they are: funding, leadership, space and transportation, play availability and selection, the sex distribution of participants, memorization problems, physical limitations of participants.

Funding

Naturally, money is a problem for senior adult theatre groups as for any other kind. True, senior adult theatre may be logically expected to be less expensive than other theatre in many ways: its practicioners are not likely to expect remuneration; nor are they given to mounting extravagent physical productions. On the other hand, their members may be less able to support their own activities because of restricted incomes; they are not likely to have the institutional support available to younger persons regularly connected to schools and colleges, such sources as the National Endowment are likely to be closed to them because they cannot claim to be professional artists.

And indeed, a number of groups report general difficulties in achieving minimal financial support. The Autumn Players, the best known company doing traditional productions on tour, finally collapsed in 1978 due to a lack of outside support. The Vintage Years Theatre Workshop, a project of the Jewish Community Center of Greater Washington, ceased activity because funding ran out. Retirement home groups like the Evergreen Players of Annandale, Virginia, and the Theatre for Senior Performers of San Fernando Valley, California, report that they have been rebuffed when requesting financial support from recreation departments or foundations. Says the leader of the Evergreen Players, "We make the best with what we've got." Says the spokesman for the Theatre for Senior Performers, "I'm getting tired . . . of slamming my head against a stone wall of indifference."

One must consider that getting money from government agencies or foundations is a contemporary skill that many older Americans may not possess. Most of the reporting groups, however, appear to be bringing in some money, either by their own devices or through some government agency. The reports generally give very little specific information about what money comes in, but it is possible at least to suggest some of the ways in which funds are obtained.

A number of reports suggest that groups have found a way to provide for themselves, either out of pocket or by fees. In 1972, Project Joy of Spokane received support from the Washington State Office on Aging. That ran out, however, whereupon Project Joy began to develop support from local patrons such as businesses and churches, for some of which it might perform. Similarly, bothered by red tape, the Theatre of Feast gave up funding from the City of Portland Bureau of Human Resources and began to charge fees from its tour hosts and currently subsists on that income.

Unlike many groups that play for seniors and those interested in senior affairs, The Seasoned Players of Prince Goerge's County charge a half dollar admission to their events and defray thereby production costs. Hartford's Center Stage also charges a fee to its hosts. Lest it be supposed that all senior adult groups consist of pensioners teetering on the economic margin, Fun and Fancy, the senior theatre group of the Rossmore Leisure World Retirement Community of Rossmore, Maryland, reports that "money is no problem," though "how to spend it is." Blessed with plenty of money earned by selling tickets to its community at $5.00 a head plus charging $3.00 dues to 140 members, Fun and Fancy has only to solve the problem of getting its large membership to come to workshops and classes. It is well to remember that some of the senior population are not starved for activity, but actually have hardly enough time for all the claims on their attention.

Some retirement communities, apparently will support senior adult theatre with cash. The Pohai Nani Players of Hawaii were able to tour to the continental United States because the parent corporation that owned their retirement community thought it worthwhile to tour them to California and Arizona retirement communities which it also owned. And in Leesburg, Florida, the management of Hawthorne Retirement Community supported the Hawthorne Players by purchasing a theatre curtain when their plays began to attract sizeable audiences (whom the Players were charging a dollar admission).

It goes without saying that university and college groups reporting generally receive some financial support from those institutions, even if only indirect costs related to the participation of faculty and the use of clerical and communication resources. Most, however, do not specify the exact nature of financial support.

A number of organizations report receiving state money. Reporting that they received general or occasional support from their state arts agency were New Haven's New Dimension Theatre Company, Waterloo's Production for Seniors, and Evansville's Community Players. San Diego State University's Dramatics with the Elderly received from the California Department of Health, one of the largest grants reported, $60,000, for its three-year series or projects ranging from a touring company to classes for rest home program directors. Since this project did not develop a long-term income plan or a permanent performing group, however, it was expected to stop at the end of the grant period. Similarly, the University of Kentucky's "Making Theatre Work for Older Americans Project" was a one-time effort paid for by a grant from the Kentucky Humanities Council.

Needless to say, some of the groups with sophisticated leadership are able to build fairly complex funding structures not unlike professional arts organizations (which may indeed be the parents of such groups). For instance, the Guthrie's Flashbacks was paid for by combined support from the National Endowment for the Arts (which could be brought in because of the Guthrie's professional status) and from Medtronic Inc. Free Street Too has developed a financial package that includes federal funding (CETA) plus performance fees of $500 per outing. Saint Paul's COMPAS (which combines a drama group with work in art and music and employs professional artists in residence to work with nursing and retirement home residents) combines support from the National Endowment, the Minnesota State Arts Board, and local foundations. Boston's New Wrinkle Theatre operates on a combination of grants (State Arts Council and "federal programs for the elderly") and booking fees.

In general, it must be pointed out that most reports were very vague concerning funding and either approximated its sources or neglected to mention them at all. Moreover, it can be guessed, but not ascertained with certainty, that some groups really needed little or no money to do what they were doing. For example it is hard to imagine that the Fort Wayne Civic Theatre's R.S.V.P., a program which integrates individual seniors into backstage activities already required for production, would involve much extra cost to the Civic Theatre beyond a possible requirement for transportation, should the theatre choose to provide it for the seniors.

We must say then that no clear funding patterns are apparent. At this point we can only say that senior theatre runs sometimes on little or no money, sometimes on fees received for performance, sometimes on grants received from government and private agencies, and sometimes fails due to the simple lack of money. However, this said, it remains to point at one very unusual funding phenomenon which does stand out in the body of reports received, a phenomenon which, on its face, must be surprising to anyone who tried to anticipate what agency would be most prominent in funding senior adult theatre programs.

CETA Support for Senior Adult Theatre. Sixteen of the reporting groups stated that they receive financial support through the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act program of the United States Department of Labor. While reports did not make various details of this funding clear, several things can be stated about it.

First, professionally based groups were commonly endowed with CETA funds. Free Street Too, Louisville's Senior Players, Bear Republic Theatre, the Arts in Education Center of Long Island's PAF Playhouse, and the Theatre Project of Rhinebeck, New York, all reported receiving CETA funds that were being or might be applied to senior theatre activities (the last two groups are not mentioned elsewhere in this report because their activities with seniors are not yet clearly developed). As might be expected, no educational institutions reported receiving CETA funds for the activities discussed in this report.

Only Project SAGE of Washington's Back Alley Theatre and Detroit's Attic Theatre reported using CETA funds for the express purpose of training seniors for the acting profession. However, Free Street Too and the Hard Times Theatre of Seattle report having paid salaries to senior adult performers from CETA funds.

Other groups apparently pay only teachers, leaders, and workers of pre-retirement age from their CETA funds. These include Hartford's Peace Train Foundation, a multi-arts program with a theatre component, the Bear Republic Theatre, the Arts and the Elderly program of St. Louis, Rhode Island's Arts and the Aging program, Seattle's Art and Aging Team, the Third Age Theatre of Ambler, Pennsylvania, and the South Coast Repertory of Cost Mesa, California, whose CETA contract paid two leaders to run drama workshops at six different area senior centers.

The most common conduit for CETA funds appears to be city and county manpower programs; five programs specifically report receiving their CETA money through one or both of those sources.

The information reported to this project does not allow definitive statements concerning any funding sources, including CETA. However, the prevalence of CETA-related monies among reporting projects prompts several questions for further investigation: first, what opportunities does CETA represent for senior adult theatre, and is senior adult theatre an important item on the CETA agenda or can it be made one? Second, what effect has CETA money had on the senior adult (and other arts) projects to which it has been awarded? Are these projects altered in objective or performance in order to obtain or keep CETA support? Third, does the presence of

CETA money imply the senior adult theatre is to be seen as a career development field?

Leadership

The topic of money inevitably leads to the topic of leadership. Often the single thing for which money is most needed is the procurement of a qualified leader.

An examination of senior adult theatre groups shows that those who are the most successful have clearly identified, and often obviously well-qualified leaders. These leaders may have certain charismatic qualities--Patrick Henry, the spirit behind Free Street Too--or merely be hard-working people with good backgrounds for theatre work with seniors--Susan Rowland of Senior Players, Louisville and Paul Boxell of Autumn Players. Sometimes groups are fortunate enough to have among their members seniors who combine energy with sufficient theatre experience to provide confident, free leadership. Dina Reese Evans Shaw of the Youngstown Players is a supreme example of this--without her the group would probably never have been formed, let alone sustained for twenty years. The Pohai Nani Players, described by one of the project investigators as perhaps "the most stable and best organized of the retirement home groups," is led by a retired music educator and self-described former music entertainment professional. The Indian River Senior Center Theatre Group and the Senior Citizen Theatre of Wauwatosa are both led by senior couples who share theatre backgrounds.

Unfortunately, however, experienced leadership is not always available. The Evergreen Players report having sought a leader in vain. Kentucky State University's Winona Fletcher reports that the group to which she had given temporary leadership did not seem able to maintain itself in the absence of a qualified leader to replace her. The founder of Second Horizon Players of Colorado Springs was quoted in a local magazine article as saying that, even after two years of operation, the group "needed an authority figure" to keep them together.[1]

It is unfortunately apparent that there is no great pool of qualified and available leadership talent on which senior adult theatre groups can draw. Some groups are led by persons with theatre background but no particular preparation for senior adult theatre. Detroit's Jewish Home for the Aged reported that, unable to locate a theatre skilled person with gerontology experience, they hired a person with a background in "youth theatre." This proved to be an unsuitable choice, and the report states that the theatre program was the only failure among six arts programs launched by the Home. When the Ambler Arts Alliance sought leadership for its CETA grant theatre program, it hired--perforce--two young men with recent theatre master's degrees, but no experience with seniors. The two leaders had the unenviable task of learning on the job and making contract performance deadlines at the same time.

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[1] "Second Horizon Players." Colorado Springs, Oct. 1977, p. 36.

Although the reports do not allow precise determinations about the qualities of leadership and the frequency of problems arising from faulty or lacking leadership, one broad generalization suggests itself. Professionally based groups and groups whose civic or quasi-governmental status provide sufficient funding can eventually develop leadership cadres that allow some fair mix of good theatre practice and attunement with the needs of the elderly. But, for retirement centers, congregate meal centers, and clubs, there would appear to be small promise of qualified leadership at the present time. Those gerontology professionals already at work in senior centers have not generally had the opportunity for theatre activity training, and these same centers lack the funds to bring in theatre-trained professionals to lead their activities.

Space (and Transportation)

The availability of an appropriate practice and performance space is a common problem in senior adult theatre. An excellent example is a six week improvisational drama workshop just concluded at the Senior Citizen Center in State College, Pennsylvania. The workshop leaders, Penn State University students, selected the local senior citizens center--located in a town church--as their work site because the center director and members were very eager, promised high participation, and had no transportation problem--the two dozen participants being routinely delivered to the site by pre-existing arrangements. For these advantages, however, the workshop paid a price. The only room large enough for the workshop also included the kitchen and the main entrance to the center. Thus, the group work proved subject to constant interruption and distraction with the result that growth was severely limited.

Other groups report similar problems. The leader of the Theatre for Senior Performers of San Fernando Valley reports that the seniors "desperately need a place to play." The report of the Fairfax County, Virginia drama program for seniors concludes that the group finally failed to establish itself because the location was inconvenient to the participants and suitable transportation was lacking.

As groups grow, they are likely to need bigger and better spaces to work. The Indian River Senior Center group met in a church for some time. By 1978, however, the parent senior club having grown to 500 members and the drama club having grown in like terms, it was decided to build a stage and dressing rooms into the new senior center that was scheduled for 1979 completion. Similarly, having started their improvisational drama troupe in a senior center, the leaders of Acting Up of Skokie, Illinois, decided to move to the Skokie Library Auditorium because their group had come to need a sense of performance. Naturally, such a move required not only that an alternative space be made available, but that transportation be a soluble problem. This is by no means always the case.

It is quite true that much senior adult drama activity, especially if it can be based on the creative drama approach, can be carried on without specialized theatre space. However, as has been pointed out earlier in this report, many groups that begin with only workshop activities in mind, come to wish for traditional performance for audiences. This decision forces upon such groups the problem of finding recognizeable theatre spaces in communities which have made no provision for the cultural needs of the senior population. Perhaps community theatres and schools will help by sharing their facilities.

Play Availability and Selection

A commonly reported problem among senior adult theatre groups is difficulty in finding good dramatic material for performance by heavily female senior casts, with a minimum of technical support and performance problems. It ought to be noted that the perception that few suitable plays are available probably rises from a combination of two factors: first, an actual paucity of good, up-to-date plays that fit the requirements of senior groups; and second, a simple lack of sophistication about such matters as play catalogs, publishers, and dramatic literature.

But, whether the primary cause is ignorance or an actual dirth of material, the problem is a real one. Such a well-run group as the Autumn Players reported that suitable plays were hard to find. Bridgeport's Thirty-Thirty Park readers theatre group reports that after three years of activity they are finding it "increasingly difficult to find plays" meeting their criteria. The second Horizon Players of Colorado Springs report that they turned to writing originals because "plays written solely for actors over 55 are rarities." The Akamai Players of Modesto report that they rely on variety and skits because they can't find enough suitable plays.

In addition to the rather common problem of finding plays, another recurring theme of the reports is that one-act plays are the preferred type. Arizona's Youngtown Players report that one-acters are better for both cast and audience. Groups like the Salem Family Theatre and the San Antonio Gardens play reading group concentrate on one-acters for reasons which are best expressed by the report of the Autumn Players, which lists five main reasons for the superiority of one acts: easier memorization; shorter rehearsal time; program flexibility--a performance may be one, two, or three one-acters, thus fitting any desired time frame; organizations booking touring groups for after-lunch theatre prefer a short entertainment; one-acts are more likely to be suitable for senior age group casting. (This last would seem debateable, but it is probably true that because of their smaller casts one-act plays generally require a narrower range of ages and thus allow seniors not to worry about accommodating fifty years age gaps within their companies.)

The most commonly mentioned title among the reports is a one-act play, Robert Anderson's I'm Herbert. Also frequently mentioned by senior groups is the Roger Cornish-John Orlock collection of one-act plays, Short Plays for the Long Living. Reflecting the apparent shortage of suitable material is the fairly common mention of very old, perhaps even dated one-act plays. The performance of such plays as Susan Gaspell's Trifles, and A Sunny Morning by the Quinteros, however justified by the basic virtues of the plays, suggests that senior groups are hard put to find suitable contemporary material.

Beyond the obvious need for one-act material, several groups suggested the qualities which senior adult theatre scripts should possess. Comedy is the choice over tragedy or melodrama by a wide margin. The Hawthorne Players point out that set changing should not be required, and several groups state or imply that women should dominate the list of characters. (See below.) Thirty-Thirty Park advises that plays about old age or the death of old people are not much in demand, although their members will respond to tragic material if it is otherwise entertaining. Finally, the San Antonio Gardens play reading group points out that anthologies are preferable to single script editions because of the tight budgets of senior groups.

In summary, it seems apparent that senior groups will benefit by the availability of better information about plays, their costs, casting, technical requirements, plot lines, etc. In addition, there is a real need for collections of well-written one-acts with good female parts and low-key production requirements. If these plays are comedies, so much the better.

Male Participation

It is the common assumption of those involved in senior adult theatre that few men participate because (1) there are fewer of them in the senior population and, (2) their prior patterns of socialization have conditioned them against accetping dramatic activity as an appropriately male pasttime. Nothing in the reports received by this project contradicts these assumptions.

One group, the Youngtown Players, reports that it began (1959) with a predominantly male membership but now has become a primarily female organization. Other groups who discuss the matter at all take it as a matter of course that men are scarce. The Salem Family Theatre reports itself to be totally female, at least as far as performing is concerned. Eugene, Oregon's One Nighters are also reported to be an all female group.

There is little to be said on this topic beyond the observation that two courses appear available to those who think significant male participation is important. Groups may open their casting to the broader community to attract men (Salem Family Theatre has done this), or they may recruit the men within their retirement homes or senior centers with greater energy. This is no easy matter; the author has observed that men who have lived by the rule that artistic activities are women's work are not easily converted in their later years. The law that the old act pretty much as they did when they were young applies with great force here.

Memorization

A first concern of many people approaching the topic of senior adult theatre is memorization. This concern undoubtedly contributes to the common reliance on creative drama as a means of introducing seniors to dramatic activity. Again, the reports to this project suggest little new about memorization. It is fair to say, however, that if memorization is a problem, it is obviously not an insuperable one.

Several groups report that, although they began activities in such a way that their members would not have to memorize, they eventually moved into traditional playing and, with the confidence of experience, surmounted memorization well enough. The Youngtown Players began with play reading and later ventured into standard performance without script in hand. The Hawthorne Players followed the same pattern with a twist. Having moved from play reading to memorized performance, they then planned to institute a play reading sub-group so that those who had indeed found that they could not memorize, could still perform.

Some groups never quite come to grips with memorization. Acting Up relies on loosely improvised scripts so that its members can play the planned thrust of a scene without having anxiety over remembering exact words. The Manlius New York Senior Drama program, whose leader reports that its members have neither the inclination nor time (workers with the retired know that they are as likely to report being over-scheduled as a Madison Avenue executive) to memorize, have strictly eschewed memorization, even for short one-acts.

On the other hand, some groups have simply attacked and overcome the problem. Center State Players of Albany, Oregon reports that memorization, though "quite a challenge and painful," has always been successfully accomplished, even by a player in her nineties.

As is often the case, the fullest report on the subject is from the Autumn Players. They report that of twenty-five performers only three had really serious problems with memorization, and that only one of those had to drop out of performance because of memorization problems. Paul Boxell concluded from the Autumn Players' experience that memorization problems had little to do with sex, previous experience, or even age, some of his best memorizers having been among his oldest participants.

Suffice it to say that memorization is something of a problem among senior performers, either because of actually failing powers or mere anxiety. However, there is little reason to believe that senior companies cannot achieve successful memorized performances.

Physical Limitations Associated with Aging

It is widely assumed that senior adults face severe limitations in attempting such physically demanding activities as dramatic performance. Therefore, it is worth notice that the groups reporting make very little mention of severe problems of physical infirmity. It is to be recognized that self-selection may fill the ranks of senior adult theatre groups with the healthiest part of the senior population. However, this does not change the fact that most reports simply ignore health as a problem.

The single infirmity mentioned most frequently is hearing loss. Center Stage Players call deafness a chief handicap of their company members. Acting Up reports that several group members have severe hearing loss, which is compensated for by the development of visual cues which allow a player who fails to hear her cue line to see it.

It should be noted that hearing loss is a particular problem in improvisational work. In the recent Penn State creative drama workshop for seniors, it was observed that it was often impossible to keep twenty or so seniors in touch with an improvisation or exercise conducted in a room with competing noise.

Other physical weaknesses mentioned in reports were weak vision (a problem for script-in-hand reading groups) and vertigo experienced by players or readers kept too long on their feet. However, in general, the project reports suggest that health is not a major impediment. The leader of Acting Up reports training her company through yoga and body-dynamics for a performance that included jogging, strenuous pantomimes, and singing.

Perhaps the best single comment in this regard is the record of the Autumn Players after a sequence of thirty-one performances, twenty-eight of them on tour: no member of the troupe had "ever missed a single performance because of fatigue, illness, or any other reason."

VI. THE QUESTION OF ARTISTIC QUALITY

Within the context of this probe, it was not possible for the investigators to visit personally more than a handful of the programs reporting. Thus, little can be said concerning the artistic quality achieved by the reporting groups. Even had the project investigators been able to make site visits to each reporting group and observe a performance or the equivalent, it would have been difficult to make confident statements about the quality of theatre being achieved.

For one thing, it is apparent at this point that there is no agreement on several questions concerning quality in senior adult theatre.

The first of these questions, and perhaps the most important, is should senior adult theatre even aspire to the ultimate goal of artistic quality? This is not easily answered. It is clearly implied in various reports that success is primarily measured in terms of the amount of participation, the ability to complete projects, and the satisfaction experienced by the participants. These values can by no means be gainsaid; they echo after all a value of the avant garde theatre--the process is more important than the product. Indeed, these very words are used in Winona Fletcher's report on the Kentucky State University project: "It was the PROCESS, not the PRODUCT, which mattered." [Italics in the original.]

Were we able to answer the first question in the affirmative, we should then have to address an even more difficult question: what level of artistic excellence can be expected from well ordered senior adult theatre groups? Here the problem is not philosophical, but experiential. We have no base from which to generalize standards of senior adult theatre excellence. Perhaps the only senior adult theatre group seen by significant numbers of both theatre professionals and gerontology professionals is Free Street Too, which has drawn virtually unalloyed praise for its artistic quality. However, until other groups of a similar type--professionally based, paid, and performing group developed life-based material--are seen and evaluated as widely, even Free Street Too's quality is only a measuring stick with no absolute dimensions.

A major problem in the assessment of senior adult theatre quality is the fact that so much praise is carelessly heaped upon any senior adult group that can conduct a performance without meeting absolute disaster. Local newspapers automatically enthuse over senior adult performance.

Good will produces similar responses from well-meaning visitors and leaders; performances are invariably wonderful. But it should be noted here that seniors themselves are not as often enchanted with their own work. One project investigator noted that several groups seemed loathe to display their efforts before regular audiences because they were unsure of the artistic quality of their endeavours.

We might observe here that seniors will probably have to deal with the same sort of reverse prejudice that has in the past been visited upon other minority groups in the arts. For a period of some years Blacks in the theatre have been patronized by critics who hesitated to find fault with Black performers or playwrights. (It is not so long ago that a New York Times critic opined that Blacks, who had long been known to be natural actors, were now demonstrating that they were natural born playwrights as well.) This prejudice in reverse works against the artistic development of the minority group by encouraging its members to become complacent and warning serious viewers not to take the work of the minority seriously.

None of this is designed to suggest that senior adult theatre must be prodded toward the same standards of excellence to which the establishment theatre supposedly adheres. It merely suggests that no standard at all is yet established, nor even the idea of a standard of quality. Perhaps in the long run it will be generally agreed that no artistic standard should be set, that in the case of seniors process is indeed the most important factor.

VII. RESEARCH

The basic matter of this probe has been the practical activities of seniors in theatre around the country. It is appropriate, however, to say a few words about the situation of research in senior adult theatre.

First, Cornish's study, "Senior Adult Theatre: The State of the Art and a Call for Research,"[1] remains valid in the main. There is still only one important research work addressed specifically to the topic of senior adult theatre, Gray's Drama for the Elderly (Columbia Teacher's College Press, 1974) and its doctoral dissertation version, (Columbia, 1972). A few masters theses such as Fallon's study of the Autumn Players (Penn State, 1975) and Patch Clark's "Tehatre Arts and the Aging" (Virginia Commonwealth University, 1979) have been done, and others, both Ph.D. and M.A. theses, are in progress.

The most complex senior adult theatre project mounted by any educational institution, Hunter College's Brookdale Drama Project begun in 1976, continues to operate as a pilot project going into its fourth year. It has not yet, however, issued a formal research report.[2]

There appreas to be a danger that solid research in the field may be supplanted by impressionistic studies created after the fact, that is, without careful pre-planning and organized data gathering. These studies will probably focus on various workshops for seniors, pilot touring companies, and the like, about which their leaders or other participants will report in a way which is untrustworthy not so much for its impressionistic approach (which is a legitimate research variant) but for the built-in bias of the reporter and for the lack of pre-project research design.

Basically, at least three kinds of formal research are needed: the first is controlled impirical studies measuring the impact of specific theatre strategies--improvisation, specific memorization techniques, for example--on test groups of seniors. An example would be the current doctoral dissertation project of Penn State University's Barbara Davis who, supported by the College of Human Development and the Department of Theatre and Film, is using standard devices to measure attitudinal change among senior adults in an improvisational drama workshop led by two theatre graduate students.

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[1] Theatre News, May 1978.

[2] A project videotape is available. Contact Milton Polsky, Center for Lifelong Learning, Hunter College, New York.

A second kind of research needed is the case study analysis of selected senior adult groups currently in operation. To date, most analysis of operating groups has been carried out by their own leaders, a situation that inevitably introduces fatal bias, prevents trustworthy evaluation of results, and even inhibits data collection. Theatre scholars must study important groups first hand and try to discover relationships between the techniques employed and the results the groups achieve, both artistic and social.

The third kind of research needed is fully scale quantitative analysis of the senior adult theatre phenomenon based on a carefully developed and administered population survey. This latter will be particularly expensive. A special problem will be the development of an appropriate sample, because such a sample should include senior adult theatre groups of the most humble sort, found in the most out-of-the-way locations. At the moment, there is no convenient master list from which to extract such a sample.

In short, except to the extent that the current probe allows us to make some intelligent, if tentative generalizations about it, senior adult theatre remains underinvestigated.

VIII. CONCLUSIONS

Summary statements have already addressed most of the major topics discussed in this report. It is necessary, therefore, only to reprise briefly a few conclusions drawn from the varied mass of information received by the project. The reader must recall that the particulars informing these generalizations are of limited number and clarity; therefore, all conclusions, however logical, are tentative.

Several outstanding features seem to characterize the current state of senior adult theatre. Among them: creative drama is a dominating approach to performance training for inexperienced seniors, at least when they are led by professionals; the incidence of touring is higher among senior adult theatre groups than among theatre groups in general; due to a number of factors, senior groups are particularly likely to perform original material; and in a confused funding picture, a striking amount of money has found its way to senior theatre from the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act program of the Department of Labor.

In terms of influences, no father figure is to be identified for the senior adult theatre movement, such as it is. However, it can be said that several persons or groups are very influential in that they have inspired others. Among them would be Chicago's Free Street Too, Oregon's Theatre of Feast, and, in terms of general approaches, the American children's theatre movement.

In terms of needs, several appear to be more basic and immediate than the many others which might be mentioned. First, it seems essential to solve the leadership problem if senior adult theatre is to grow in a less haphazard, more quality-oriented fashion.

Second, communities should address the space and transportation needs of seniors groups who wish to progress to public performance. Community theatres can share their stages, and public schools can invite seniors to use their auditoriums. At a time of decreasing school populations, the school system may by such services provide maximum use for facilities plus put into the hands of seniors some of the benefits of their many years of school taxation.

Third, senior adult theatre needs plays--plays that are funny, plays that are particularly suitable for simple production with senior, predominantly female casts, one-act plays that are well advertised, easily obtainable, and, preferably available in large-type editions. In short, there needs to be for seniors, the sort of body of dramatic literature that is now available to children's theatre. And, of course, it must be of quality.

Fourth, the scholarly community must address itself to the basic research needs of senior adult theatre. These needs range from the development of statistical data concerning participation, location, and other quantifiable characteristics to controlled studies which clarify the relationships between specific activities and psychological and physiological results. Research, of course, must be paid for. Here we confront the problem of competition for the dollar and the difficulty of convincing people that research is important when there is little completed research to use as evidence. As the Rockefeller Foundation put it in its 1978 report, The Healing Role of the Arts," advocacy must be supported by research but to get money for research there must first be advocacy."

Finally, there are several things that we may obviously look to see in the next few years. One is continued growth in a phenomenon which appears to have multiplied at a very rapid rate during the last few years. Senior dault theatre will increase.

Second, we may look to see more theatre students experimenting with senior adult theatre leadership work during their college training years. Whether they shall have appropriate specialized training is a matter not so easy to predict.

Third, seniors will continue to ask more of service organizations like the American Theatre Association and the Alliance for Arts Education. Whether they receive the support they ask depends on the resources available to such organizations and the priorities they set for the distribution of those resources. Both those things depend on the advocates who support the right of senior Americans to fully share the art of the theatre and every other art of living.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX I

The Senior Adult Research Project is grateful for the contributions made by all of the reporting Theatre Groups, and to the following individuals and organizations.

List of Contributors

Alliance for Arts Education (AAE)
John F. Kennedy Center
Washington, D.C. 20566
Jack Kukuk, Director of Education

American Foundation for the Blind
15 West 16th Street
New York, New York 10011

American Foundation for the Blind
Legislative Office
1660 L Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

Andrus, Ethel Percy, Gerontology Center
University of Southern California
Los Angeles, California 90007

Arey, Barbara, Program Coordinator
Bishop Edward A. Penick Memorial Home
Episcopal Home for the Aging
St. Peters Nursing Center
P.O. Box 2001
Southern Pines, North Carolina 28387

Arizona Commission on the Arts and Humanities
Adrienne Hirsch
Performing Arts Coordinator
6330 North Seventh Street
Phoenix, Arizona 85014

Aronson, Jean, Director
Older Americans Program
American Association of Community
and Junior Colleges
One Dupont Circle, N.W.
Suite 410
Washington, D.C. 20036

Arts Council of Greater New Orleans
205 Gallier Hall
545 St. Charles Avenue
New Orleans, Louisiana 70130

Baldus, Benjamin M., Policy Analyst
Policy and Program Development
Office of Services to the Aging
300 East Michigan Avenue
P.O. Box 30026
Lansing, Michigan 48909

Business Committee for the Arts
Gavin K. MacBain, Chairman
1700 Broadway
New York, New York 10019

Center for Arts Administration
Graduate School of Business
University of Wisconsin-Madison
1155 Observatory Drive
Madison, Wisconsin 53706

Center for Arts Information
Ellen Thurston, Director
152 West 42nd Street
New York, New York 10036

Clearinghouse for Adult Education and
Life Long Learning (ADELL)
Informatics Inc.
6011 Executive Boulevard
Rockville, Maryland 20852

Deutsch, Henri
c/o Senior Action Coalition
135 West Wells
Suite 805
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53203

Eccles, Margaret
Clearinghouse for Adult Education
and Life Long Learning (ADELL)
6011 Executive Boulevard
Rockville, Maryland 20852

Educational Facilities Laboratories
850 Third Avenue
New York, New York 10022

Family Service Association of America
Plays for Living
Mrs. George Lane, Jr., Administrator
44 East 23rd Street
New York, New York 10010

Firman, James, Program Coordinator
Intergenerational Services Project
NCOA
1828 L Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

Ford Foundation
Office of Reports
320 East 43rd Street
New York, New York 10017

Ford, William D, Congressman
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Freda, Barbara, Conference Coordinator
NCOA
1828 L Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

Gerson, Richard
159 North College
Fresno, California 93701

Green, Ms. Lila, Program Coordinator
Institute of Gerontology
University of Michigan
520 East Liberty Street
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109

Hoffman, Dr. Donald H., Director
Council on Aging
Donovan Scholars Program
Room 4 - Frazee Hall
University of Kentucky
Lexington, Kentucky 40506

Idaho Arts Council
Dr. Gerald Reed, Director
Office of Special Projects
Arts for Idaho's Senior Citizens
Boise State University
Boise, Idaho 83725

Interfaith Program for the Elderly
Ms. Colitle Pochert, Central Staff
1442 North Farwell Avenue
Suite 104
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202

Johnson, David & Dr. Susan Sandel
The Loft
Two Eld Street
New Haven, Connecticut 06551

Kansas Arts Commission
Linda Tuttle, Arts/Aging Coordinator
509A Kansas Avenue
Topeka, Kansas 66603

Kaplan, Judith M., Acting Head Librarian
American Foundation for the Blind
15 West 16th Street
New York, New York 10011

Kelly, Peggy, Resource Specialist
Center for Studies in Aging
North Texas State University
P.O. Box 13438
North Texas State University Station
Denton, Texas 76203

Kennedy, Rev. Paul, Executive Director
National Benevolent Association
Christian Church
115 North Jefferson
St. Louis, Missouri 63103

Kent, Professor Everett, Chairman
University of Alaska
Department of Theatre
Anchorage, Alaska

Kirchhofer, Mary V., Vice President
Potentials Development for Health
and Aging Services, Inc.
775 Main Street
Suite 325
Buffalo, New York 14203

Korf, Jean, Chairman
Department of Theatre
Rio Hondo College
Whittier, California

Lenoir Theatre Workshop
Nancy Wahonick, Director of Communication
National Benevolent Association
Division Health and Social Services
Christian Church
115 North Jefferson
St. Louis, Missouri 63103

Lervis, Sandra, Geriatric Supervisor
Department of Occupational Therapy
Norristown State Hospital
Norristown, Pennsylvania 19401

Louisiana State Department of Culture, Recreation, Tourism
Office of Program Development - Division of the Arts
Jodie Glorioso, Arts Program Coordinator
P.O. Box 44247
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804

Meyers, Paul, Curator, Theatre Collection
Library and Museum of Performing Arts at Lincoln Center
111 Amsterdam Avenue
New York, New York 10023

Mississippi Arts Commission
Lida Rogers, Executive Director
301 North Lamar Street, P.O. Box 1341
Jackson, Mississippi 39205

McCarthy, Dr. Joe, Senior Program Advisor
Arts-In-Education
Division of General Education
Bureau of Curriculum Services
Department of Education
Box 911
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17126

McCutcheon, Priscilla, Program Associate
Senior Center Humanities Program - NCOA
1828 L Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

McGann, Research Associate
The Committee for Gerontology
University of Texas at Austin
Austin, Texas 78712

McKinlay, Robert, ASTRA Developer
Center for the Study of Aging and Human Development
Duke University Medical Center - Box 3003
Durhan, North Carolina 27710

Nass, Elye
60-10 47th Avenue
Woodside, New York 11377

National Advisory Council on Extension and Continuing Education
425 13th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20004

National Center on Arts and the Aging/NCOA
Jacquline Sunderland, Director
1828 L Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

National Center for Urban and Ethnic Affairs
1521 16th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

National Clearinghouse for Mental Health
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville, Maryland

National Committee Arts for the Handicapped
Wendy Perks, Executive Director
1701 K Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C.

National Council for Arts and Education, Inc.
Frances Richard, Executive Director
743 Fifth Avenue
New York, New York 10022

National Federation of the Blind, Inc.
1346 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C.

National Guild of Community Schools of the Arts, Inc.
Marcy Horowitz, Executive Director
570 Seventh Avenue, 17th Floor
New York, New York 10018

National Institute of Senior Centers
NCOA
Joyce Leanse, Director
1828 L Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

Nidecker, John E., B.S.G.
Brotherhood of St. Gregory
642 Crocus Drive
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Ohio Community on Aging
Joe Gall, Communication Coordinator
50 West Broad Street, 9th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Ostrom, Ann, Program Coordinator
Program on Aging
University of Wisconsin - Extension
610 Langdon Street, Room 230
Madison, Wisconsin 53706

Paolini, Dr. Shirley
Arts - Reach Director
Anchorage Arts Council
402 West 3rd Avenue, Number 7
Sunshine Plaza
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Pennsylvania Council on the Arts
Peter M. Carnahan, Director of Performing Arts
Shore Drive Office Center
2001 North Front Street
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17102

Peterson, Richard E.
Senior Research Psychologist
Educational Testing Service
1947 Center Street
Berkley, California 94704

Poyatz, Mr. Walter J.
PoHaiNaNi
Retirement Residence
45-090 Namoku Street
Kaneohe, Hawaii 96744

Prugh, Patti, Intern
National Committee on Arts for the Handicapped
1701 K Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

Rhode Island State Council on the Arts
James D. Johnson, Director of Community Development
334 Westminster Mall
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

Richardson, Dorcus, Secretary
Driftwood Players
1407 B Street
Hoquiam, Washington 98550

Richardson, Dr. Howard
207 Columbus Avenue
New York, New York 10023

Riley, Trish, Project Administrator
"Old Age Tradition Shelved or Shared?"
Maine Committee on Aging
State House
Augusta, Maine 04330

Schulmeister, Lorraine, Administrator Specialist
Member Services
A/RTA/AARP
1909 K Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20049

Segedin, Ms. Elizabeth
Interface Bibliographers
3018 Hillegass
Berkeley, California 94705

Seitz, Mary Ann, Executive Director
Boise Council On Aging, Inc.
Fort Boise Community Center
700 Robbins Road, Suite 2
Boise, Idaho 83702

Smith, Donald D., Director
National Clearinghouse on Aging
Administration on Aging
330 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C.

Smith, Verna, Director Public Information
CEMREL, Inc.
3120 59th Street
St. Louis, Missouri 63139

South Dakota Arts Council
Dennis Holub, Program Director
108 West 11th
Sioux Falls, South Dakota 57102

South Carolina Arts Commission
Harry Harrison, Special Program Coordinator
Contemporary Arts Division
Boyalston House
829 Richland Street
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

Sullivan, James E., Librarian
Woods Memorial Library
Barre, Massachusetts 01005

Tennessee Arts Commission
John Bridges, Director of Theatre Programs
222 Capitol Hill Building
Nashville, Tennessee 37219

Theatre Development Fund, Inc.
Hugh Southern, Executive Director
1501 Broadway
New York, New York 10036

Thompson, Bill
Performing Arts Foundation of Long Island
97 Little Neck Road
Centerpoint, New York 11721

Turner, Mary G., Assistant Superintendent Adult and Continuing Education
D.C. Public Schools
Presidential Building, Room 1010
415 12th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20004

University of Kentucky
Council on Aging and College of Fine Arts
Donald Hoffman, Council on Aging

University of Maine at Orono
Burton Alho and Beth Hartman
Oral History Project
Office of Equal Opportunity
259 Aubert Hall
Orono, Maine 04473

University of Wisconsin, Madison
Professor E. Arthur Prieve, Director
Center for Arts Administration
1155 Observatory Drive
Madison, Wisconsin 53706

Weisberg, Ms. Nadia, Publisher
Improvise
48 Barberry Hill
Providence, Rhode Island 02906

Western, Leone Noble
1215 "C" Street
Port Angeles, Washington 98362

Wright, Douglas, Public Inquiries Specialist
Department of Health, Education and Welfare
Office of the Secretary
Office of Human Development Services
Administration on Aging
Washington, D.C. 20201

Wolfe, Charles S., Executive Director
Jewish Home for Aged
Borman Hall
19100 West Seven Mile Road
Detroit, Michigan 48219

Wyoming Council on the Arts
Joan Westphall, Administrative Secretary
200 West 25th Street
Cheyenne, Wyoming 82001

Preface to the Selected Reading List

During the course of the Probe, several hundred letters were received requesting technical assistance in program development and a bibliography of senior drama/theatre. The requests came from a wide range of sources including: college faculties, national aging clearinghouses and information centers, institutes of gerontology, as well as individual theatre artists, and program administrators from federal and the private sectors. Anyone who has worked directly in the field of senior adult theatre knows the paucity of materials: Gray's book, the plays of Orlock and Cornish, and a few journal articles.

As part of the Probe, we interviewed theatre practicioners, and drama therapists, aging administrators, arts educators. We talked with personnel of senior centers, day and residential care and hospice facilities. We viewed senior drama classes and performances. We attended national and regional conferences and seminars on theatre arts and the aging. What emerged from these activities, was the need of a Selected Reading List covering several fields, current, qualitative, and flexible enough, to cover the many forms of theatre practice, variations in the practicioners' orientation and training, and the diversity of environments where the activity occurs.

The consensus of the Project Team was not to include a play list. The advice of several colleagues; the scholarly wit and wisdom from the Gentlemen of the Research Team; generous contributions of review material; and the assistance of Librarians; was helpful and appreciated.

No listing will meet every situation but the "state of the art" seems to suggest that some knowledge may be useful in the areas of grantsmanship, advocacy, federal legislation, programs, and funding; social gerontology; and adult and arts education. The trained theatre person can creatively innovate and adapt; the community agency staff will find resources in the Arts Network and Directory of Theatre Group Contact Persons; the uninitiated will note the inclusion of materials on issues which impact directly on work in the arts with the aging.

The Bibliographer is responsible for the final choices which hopefully will enable some to establish programs and facilitate others in a continuing exploration of new forms.

Patricia Royston Sawyer
Investigator-Bibliographer
Washington, D.C., 4/79

APPENDIX II

Selected Reading List

Bibliographies

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"All Points Peace" (video tape) - Jeanann Celli, Train Foundation, 63 Jirard Avenue, Hartford, Connecticut 06105

Autumn Players (2 video tapes) - Dr. Paul Boxell, Fine Arts Department, Catonsville Community College, Catonsville, Maryland

Center Stage, Jewish Community Center Theatre Group (video tape) - Hanna Shapero, Hartford Jewish Community Center, 335 Bloomfield Avenue, West Hartford, Connecticut 06117

"Creative Drama with the Elderly," (video tape) - Milton Polsky, Institute for Lifelong Learning, Hunter College, Brookdale Center on Aging, 466 Lexington Avenue, New York, New York 10017

"Creative Drama Workshop," (video tape) - Dr. Grace Stanistreet, Department of Communication, Adelphi University

"Drama Therapy with Geriatric Clients," (video tape) - David Johnson, The Loft, Two Eld Street, New Haven, Connecticut 06551

Free Street Too, "Lines of Grey," (film); "To Life," (video tape: WBBM-TV PBS Chicago) - Richard Driscoll, 59 West Hubbard Street, Chicago, Illinois 60610

"Looking for Yesterday," (film) - Naomi Feil, 4614 Prospect Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44103

"Movement Therapy with Older People," (2 video tapes), Susan Sandel, The Loft, Two Eld Street, New Haven, Connecticut 06511

"New Dimension Theatre Company," (video tape) - Gregory Huth, 8 Hughes Place, New Haven, Connecticut 06511

New Wrinkle Theatre (videotape) - Mark Rider, 25 Essex Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02119

"Old Age: Tradition Shelved or Shared?" (videotape) - Burton Alho/Beth Hartman, Office of Equal Opportunity, 259 Albert Hall, University of Orono, Orono, Maine 04473

Senior Arts Program - Urban Gateways (film) - Shirley Genther, 127 North Dearborn Street, Chicago, Illinois 60602

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Drama Book Specialists, 150 West 52nd Street, New York, New York 10019

Dramatists Play Service, Inc., 440 Park Avenue South, New York, New York 10016

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Heineman Drama, Heinemann Educational Books, 48 Charles Street, London, W1X8AH

New Plays Inc., Box 273, Rowayton, Connecticut 06853

Plays, Inc., 8 Arlington Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02116

Samuel Freneh, Inc., 25 West 45th Street, New York, New York 10036

Talonbooks, Drama Catalogue, Serv-West, 8320 Prince Edward Street, Vancouver, British Columbia V5X3R9

APPENDIX III

Special Acknowledgments

Special thanks is extended to the following for technical assistance with the investigation and the Bibliography.

Kozelka, Dr. Paul, Ret. Department of Theatre, Columbia Teacher's College, New York City, former Chairman, Senior Adult Theatre Committee/ATA

Roberts, Dr. Vera Mowrey, Chairperson, Department Theatre and Cinema, Hunter College, New York, National Committee Senior Adult Theatre Program/ATA

Alverey, Ronald (the late), former Director, Humanities Program, NCOA

Arnold, Bene, Department of Dance, University of Utah, 2191 Westminster, Salt Lake City, Utah 84108

Balkemar, John, Librarian, National Council on Aging, 1828 L Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036

Berg, Yolanda, Program Director, Intergenerational Projects, AARP/NRTA, 1909 K Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20049

Brightman, Dr. Sam, Office of Education, National Council of Senior Citizens, 1511 K Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005

Bush, Nancy, Acting President, American Council for the Arts, 2000 P Street, N.W., Suite 419, Washington, D.C. 20036 - Editor ACA Reports

Burr, James J., Director, Division of Program Development, Administration for Public Service, DHEW, South Building, Room 2230, 330 C Street, S.W., Washington, D.C.

Center for Arts Information, 152 West 42nd Street, New York, New York 10036 - Ellen Thurston, Director

Duke, Ms. Lani Lattin, Former Program Coordinator, Division of Special Constituencies, National Endowment for the Arts, 2401 E Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20506

Harbin, Dr. Shirley, Director, Performing Arts, Detroit Recreation Department, 2735 W. Warren at Lawton, Detroit, Michigan 48208

Kukuk, Jack, Director of Education, Alliance for Arts Education, J.F. Kennedy Center, Washington, D.C.

Kurzband, Dr. Toby, Program Coordinator, Creative Arts Center for Older Adults Program, New School for Social Research, 66 West 12th Street, New York, New York 10011

Madeja, Dr. Stanley S., Vice President, CEMREL, Inc., 3120 59th Street, St. Louis, Missouri 63139

Mayrand, Mr. Lionel, Associate Director, New England Gerontology Center, 15 Garrison Avenue, Durham, New Hampshire 03824

Morrison, Dr. Jack, Project Director, Executive Director, American Theatre Association

Murphy, Dr. Judith, Creative Center for Older Adults Program, The School of Human Relations, New School for Social Research

Perks, Wendy, Director, National Committee Arts for the Handicapped, 1701 K Street, N.W., Washington, D.C.

Richardson, Ms. Penny, former Director, Life Long Learning Project, DHEW, U.S. Office of Education, Washington, D.C.

Rogers, Mr. Forbes, Former Director, Alliance for Arts Education, Education Division, National Endowment for the Arts, 2401 E Street, N.W., Washington, D.C.

Rogers, R. Virginia, Education Coordinator, Alliance for Arts Education, J.F. Kennedy Center, Washington, D.C. 20566

Sunderland, Jacqueline T., Director, Center on Arts and the Aging, NCOA, 1828 L Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036

Tarleton, Bennett, Director, National Aesthetic Education Learning Center, J.F. Kennedy Center, Washington, D.C.

The National Arts and The Handicapped Information Service, Larry Molloy, Director, Arts Box 2040, Grand Central Station, New York, New York 10017

Theatre Communications Group, Peter Ziesler, Director, 355 Lexington Avenue, New York, New York 10017

Timberman, Ann, Director, State and Local Programs, Alliance for Arts Education, J.F. Kennedy Center, Washington, D.C. 20566

Timmerman, Sandra, Dean, Institute of Lifetime Learning, NRTA/AARP, 1909 K Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20049

Van Dorn, Ruth, Director, The School of Human Relations, New School for Social Research, 66 West 12th Street, New York City 10011

Waterman, Bill, Director, Arts and Humanities Groups, The National Center for Urban Ethnic Affairs, 1521 16th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036

Wilder, Rosilyn, Consultant on Drama Therapy, Rutgers University Gerontology Institute, 10 Clairidge Court, Montclaire, New Jersey 07042

APPENDIX IV

Directory of Senior Adult Theatre Groups and Resource Persons In the United States by States

ALASKA

Alaska Repetory Theatre
Jack Lloyd
523 West 8th Avenue, Suite 110
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

University of Alaska
Professor Everett Kent, Chairman
Department of Theatre
University of Alaska, Anchorage

ARIZONA

Youngtown Players, Inc. - Youngtown, Arizona
Dina Reese Evans Shaw/Agnes D. Bower
11134 Hollywood Avenue
Youngtown, Arizona 85363

ARKANSAS

Seniors Having Arts Related Experiences (SHARE)
Paula Beck, Program Coordinator
Arkansas Arts Council
Continental Building - Suite 500
Markham and Main
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

CALIFORNIA

Senior Human Development Project
Don and Victoria Laffoon
456 Bent Street
Lagune Beach, California 92651

Senior Adult Theatre Interest Group
Olive Hively, Program Supervisor
Fresno Learning Center
Masters Towers
1240 Broadway Plaza
Fresno, California 93721

Saturday Night Social
Mrs. H.C. Sievers
460 San Mateo Circle
Hemet, California 92343

Peninsula Volunteers Little House Senior Theatre Group
Andrew Bradley, Administrator
Peninsula Volunteers Inc.
800 Middle Avenue
Menlo Park, California 94025

Akamai Players
Ms. Saleta Dilwood, Chairman
Homewood Village
2000 Mable Avenue
Modesto, California

The Theatre for Senior Performers - Serendipity Playhouse
Roberta Vanneman
17810 Superior Street
Northridge, California 91325

Valle Verde Retirement Home - American Baptist Homes of the West
Mary Remisk, Activity Coordinator
American Baptist Homes of the West
900 Calle De Los Amigos
Santa Barbara, California 93105

Bear Republic Theatre
Michael Griggs
P.O. Box 1137
Santa Cruz, California 95061

Dramatics with the Elderly - San Diego State University
Dr. Joseph Bellinghiere
D.A. 226 San Diego State University
San Diego, California 92182

Tale Spinners
Betsy Eddy
934 Brannon Street
San Francisco, California 94107

Play Readers - United Church Christ Group
Marie Fischer Wing
900 East Harrison B 18
Pamona, California 91767

CONNECTICUT

Senior Play Reader - Thirty-Thirty Park
Mrs. Constance Bell, Chairman
Thirty-Thirty Park
3030 Park Avenue, Apt. 8N9
Bridgeport, Connecticut 06604

All Points Express Peace Train Foundation
Jeanann Celli, Artistic Director
63 Girard Avenue
Hartford, Connecticut 06105

Center Stage -- Jewish Community Center Theatre Group
Hanna Shapero
Hartford Jewish Community Center
335 Bloomfield Avenue
West Hartford, Connecticut 06117

Creative Movement for Older People
Institute for Movement Exploration
Part of M.A. Program at Wesleyan University
Alice Martin DeMund, Director
Institute for Movement Exploration, Inc.
15 Lewis Street
Hartford, Connecticut 06103

Creative Movement for Older People
Carolyn Rashti, Dance Therapist
Institute for Movement Exploration
15 Lewis Street
Hartford, Connecticut 06103

Drama Therapy with Geriatric Patients
Sound View Specialized Care Center, West Haven, Conn.
David Johnson and Dr. Susan Sandel
The Loft
1 Eld Street
New Haven, Connecticut 06511

New Dimension Theatre Co.
Gregory Huth, Artistic Director
N.D.T. Co.
8 Hughes Place
New Haven, Connecticut 06511

Media and the Arts for Social Services
Dr. Michael Gregoric, Director
The University of Connecticut
U-Box 127
Storrs, Connecticut 06268

COLORADO

Colorado Caravan
Martin Cobin, Executive Director
Department Theatre and Dance
University of Colorado at Boulder
Boulder, Colorado 80309

Second Horizon Players
Ann Truitt, Supervisor of Program or
Fran O'Malley Hanson, Director
104 East Platte Avenue
Colorado Springs, Colorado

Lakewood Community Center - Senior Drama Classes
Department Parks Recreation
Lakewood Community Center
8715 West 16th Avenue
Lakewood, Colorado 80215

DELAWARE

Indian River Senior Center
Mrs. Molly Speck
227 Shroud Street
Pot Nets Park
Millsboro, Delaware 19966

Newark, Delaware Senior Center Players
Roy G. Rudy
115 Osage Lane
Newark, Delaware 19711, or
Mrs. Emily McGlenchey, Director
76 Welsh Tract Road, Apt. 304
Newark, Delaware 19713

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Back Alley Theatre
Washington, D.C.

The Dance Exchange - Intergenerational Senior Dance Group
Pamela Lasswell
1443-1445 Rhode Island Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005

Living Stage/Arena Theatre
Martha Vinogard, Director of Development
Robert Alexander, Director
6th and Maine Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20024

The Psychiatric Institute Foundation -
Senior Citizen's Performing Arts Program
Carole Szpak, Director
4460 MacArthur Boulevard
Washington, D.C. 20007

Society for Artistic Development of the Elderly (SAGE)
Francis Clayton
Washington, D.C.

FLORIDA

American Association of University Women Play Reading (AAUW)
Ruth Rogers
558 Highland Avenue
Dunedin, Florida 33528

Hawthorne Players
Mr. James Hambleton
107 Camallia Trail
P.O. Box T
Leesburg, Florida 32748

Lake-Sumter Community College
David Payne, Drama Coordinator
Leesburg, Florida 32748

HAWAII

Po Hai Nani Players
Walter J. Poyntz, Producer
45-080 Namoku Street, Apt. 813
Kaneoha, Hawaii 96744

IDAHO

Boise Council on Aging, Inc.
Mary Ann Seitz, Executive Director
Fort Boise Community Center
700 Robbins Road, Suite 2
Boise, Idaho 83702

Arts for Idaho's Senior Citizens
Dr. Gerald Reed, Director
Office of Special Projects
1910 College Boulevard
Boise, Idaho 83725

ILLINOIS

Free Street Too
Richard G. Driscoll, Manager
59 Hubbard Street
Chicago, Illinois 60610

Senior Arts Program, Urban Gateways, Arts Education Programs
Shirley Genther, Program Director
127 North Dearborn Street
Chicago, Illinois 60602

Northlight Repertory Company
Janet Wilson, Assistant to Production Director
927 Noyes Street
Evanston, Illinois 60201

Acting Up!
Marcie Telander, Director
7900 North Nagle
Morton Grove, Illinois 60053

Active Retired Senior Citizens Club
Triton Community College
George Dear
2000 Fifth Avenue
Tiver Grove, Illinois 60171

INDIANA

The Community Players
Beverly Elliott, Coordinator
906 Main Street
Evansville, Indiana 47708

Fort Wayne Civic Theatre
Fort Wayne, Indiana

Franklin United Methodist Home
Rev. Dr. James L. Ray, Chaplin
Franklin United Methodist Home
1070 West Jefferson
Franklin, Indiana 46131

Making Theatre Work for Older Americans
Dr. Winona Fletcher
Department of Theatre and Drama
University of Indiana
Bloomington, Indiana 47401

IOWA

Theatre for Creative Involvement
Dr. Lewin Goff
University Theatre
University of Iowa
Iowa City, Iowa 52242

Waterloo Community Playhouse
Mary Tharp, Business Manager
Box 433
Waterloo, Iowa 50704

KANSAS

The Barn Players
Jeff Moyer
5165 Merriam Drive
Shawnee, Kansas 66203

KENTUCKY

Council on Aging
Donavan Scholars Program
University of Kentucky
Dr. Donald Hoffman
Room 4, Frazee Hall
Lexington, Kentucky 40506

Senior Players Company of the Actors' Theatre Company
Ms. Susand Rowland, Project Director
316-320 West Main Street
Louisville, Kentucky 40202

LOUISIANA

NORD Theatre
Ty Tracy
Room 108, Gallier Hall
705 Lafayette Street
New Orleans, Louisiana 70130

Socio-Drama and Drama Therapy Program
Robert Fleshman, Director
Loyola University
Department of Speech and Drama
6363 St. Charles Avenue
New Orleans, Louisiana 70118

Training for Artists Working with Older People
John H. Fulwiler, Director or
Kathleen Boehnker, Director for Arts Programming for Aging
Delgado College
New Orleans, Louisiana

MAINE

Oral History Reader's Theatre Project
Trish Riley, Project Administrator
Maine Committee on Aging
State House
Augusta, Maine 04330

MARYLAND

Drama/Oral History Project
Waxter Center for Senior Citizens
Marie Lehuert
3433 Pierce Drive
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

Dynamic Living in Retirement
Isabel Burger
College of Notre Dame
Baltimore, Maryland

Autumn Players
Dr. Paul Boxell, Chairman
Fine Arts Department
Catonsville Community College
Catonsville, Maryland

"Seasoned Players" - Community Theatre Group
Charles Steeg, President
1303 Madison Street
Chillum, Maryland 20782

Vintage Years Life Theatre Workshop
Jewish Community Center of Greater Metropolitan
Washington at Rockville, Maryland
Patricia Sawyer
25 Welwyn Way
Rockville, Maryland

MASSACHUSETTS

Drama Therapy
Amherst Adult Day Center with Seniors
Rickey Mazor
125 Potwine Lane
Amherst, Massachusetts 01002

ElderArts/"Age on Stage"
Jill Anderson, Director
Commission on Affairs of the Elderly
Boston City Hall
City Hall Plaza, Massachusetts 02201

New Wrinkle Theatre
Mark Rider, Founder-Director
Myrtle Johnson, Production Coordinator
25 Essex Street
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02119
102 Charles Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02115

Elders Tour Program
James F. Williams, Seniors Program Coordinator
The People's Theatre
1253 Cambridge Street
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

MICHIGAN

Teaching-Learning Communities
Ms. Carol Tice, Director
Media Resources Center
University of Michigan
400 Fourth Street
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109

Drama and Literature with Elderly
Lila Green, Program Coordinator
University of Michigan
Institute of Gerontology
502 East Liberty Street
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109

Considine Recreation Center - Senior Theatre Group
Susan Burr
Considine Center
8904 Woodward at Holbrook
Detroit, Michigan

Jewish Home for Aged/Detroit
Mr. Charles Wolfe, Executive Director
Borman Hall
19100 West Seven Mile Road
Detroit, Michigan 48219

Oldsters Mime Show
LaVinia Moyer
Attic Theatre of Detroit
Greek Town - Monroe Street
Detroit, Michigan 48226

MINNESOTA

Community Programs in the Arts and Sciences (COMPAS)
Joan Beaubien, Senior Arts Program Director
St. Paul Building
5th and Wabasha
St. Paul, Minnesota 55102

The Guthrie Theatre
Cynthia Pierson or
Gail Smogard, Outreach Program
Vineland Place
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55403

The Senior Stars - Illusion Theatre
Bonnie Morris, Director
323 Second Avenue North
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55401

MISSOURI

"Death and Theatre"
Patricia McIlrath, Chairman
Department of Theatre
University of Missouri
Kansas City, Missouri 64110

Arts and the Elderly Program
Robert Worthy, Program Coordinator
Mayors Office for Senior Citizens
560 Convention Plazza
St. Louis, Missouri 63101

"Arts for Older Adults"
Ms. Marylen Mann, Coordinator
CEMREL, Inc.
3120 59th Street
St. Louis, Missouri 63139

Lenoir Theatre Workshop
Nancy Wahonick, Director of Communications
The National Benevolent Association
115 North Jefferson
St. Louis, Missouri 63103

Arts and the Elderly Program - Creative Theatre Workshop
South Side Senior Center
2931 LaSalle Street
St. Louis, Missouri

Arts and the Elderly Program - Creative Theatre Workshop
Visual and Performing ARts Center of the St. Louis Public Schools
5329 Columbia Avenue
St. Louis, Missouri

Older Missourians Drama Project
Michael D. Patrick, Project Director
Division of Extension and Humanities Division
University of Missouri-Rolla
Rolla, Missouri 65401

Social Dramatics Program - Nevada State School and Hospital
Dr. Richard Klepac, Director
402 South Spring
Nevada, Missouri 64772

MONTANA

Theatre for the Aged Workshops
Victoria M. Tait
Department Theatre/Communication Arts
Eastern Montana College
Billings, Montana 59101

NEBRASKA

Omaha Magic Theatre
Lynn Herrick
1417 Farnam Street
Omaha, Nebraska 68102

NEW YORK

Creative Drama Workshop
Dr. Grace Stainstreet
4 Nulford Place
Hempstead, New York 11550

The Limestone - Manlius, New York Senior Citizens Program Parks an Recreation Department
Barbara R. Vojta
P.O. Box 382
Jamesville, New York 13078

Brookdale Hunter College Drama Project, Department of Cinema and Theatre, Hunter College
Dr. Milton Polsky, Director
Center for Lifelong Learning
Brookdale Center on Aging
466 Lexington Avenue
New York, New York 10017

Creative Arts Center for Older Adults - New School for Social Research
Babette Becker or Roby Kurzband, Program Doordinators
66 West 12th Street
New York, New York 10011

92nd Street Senior YMYWHA Group
Jeanette Hainer, Director Senior Adult Division
92nd Street YM, YWHA
New York, New York 10028

The Season Citizens Workshop - Double Image Theatre, Inc. Performing Arts Training Center
Claire Michaels
Double Image Theatre, Inc.
John Jay College of Criminal Justice
444 West 56th Street, Room 1110
New York, New York 10019

Theatre for Older People (TOP)
Susan Miller, Administrator
Joseph Jefferson Theatre Co., Inc.
One East 29th Street
New York, New York 10016

Briarcrest Nursing Home
Maria Kandilakis, Activities Director
38 Minkel Road
Ossining, New York 10562

Taconis Theatre Company
Bonnye MacLeod
26 East Market Street
Rhinebeck, New York 12572

The Theatre Project
Jeanne Fleming
7 Livingston Street
Rhinebeck, New York 17571

White Plains Senior Center Drama Group
Ruth Tate, Director
24S Broadway
White Plains Senior Center
White Plains, New York

NEW JERSEY

Taking the Arts to the People Project
Jacqueline E. Rubel
Gerontology Institute of Rutgers University
and Middlesex County Arts/Aging Commission
Administration Annex
841 Georges Road
North Brunswick, New Jersey 80902

NORTH CAROLINA

Creative Drama Elderhostel
Tom Behm
University of North Carolina
Greensboro, North Carolina 27412

Senior Adult Theatre Program
Jack Peyronse
Methodist College
Fayettesville, North Carolina

OHIO

Looking for Yesterday
Naomi Feil, Psychiatric Social Worker
(Drama and Role Play for Therapy)
4614 Prospect Avenue
Cleveland, Ohio 44103

Story Theatre Project
David Neuman, Professor of Theatre
Inter-Arts Department
Warner Center - Oberlin College
Oberlin, Ohio 44074

OREGON

Center Stage Players
Mildred K. Gonzales
635 Fulton Street
Albany, Oregon 97321

One Nighters
H. Margaret Landers
885 East 36th Street
Eugene, Oregon 97405

Theatre of Feast
Professor Alberto Creghino
2035 Southeast 72nd
Portland, Oregon 97215

M'Turing Company of Gallery Players
Helene Nelson
150 Linfield Avenue
McMinnville, Oregon 97128

Salem Family Theatre
Mr. & Mrs. John E. Garson
5260 Lardon Road, N.E.
Salem, Oregon 97303

PENNSYLVANIA

Arts in Human Services Courses
Gene G. Suskalo, Associate Professor of Music
California State College
California, Pennsylvania 15419

Third Age Theatre
David France or William Bauman
Ambler Arts Alliance
Madison and Prospect Avenues
Ft. Washington, Pennsylvania 19024

Ways and Meaning Place - Program for Senior Adults
Dr. Joe McCarthy, Senior Program Advisor
Arts-in-Education
Division of General Education
Bureau of Curriculum Services
Department of Education
Box 911
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17126

RHODE ISLAND

Arts and Aging Program
James D. Johnson, Community Development Coordinator
Rhode Island State Council on the Arts
334 Westminster Mall
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

Creative Drama Program
Naida Weisberg, Coordinator
Rhode Island Council on the Arts
P.O. Box 2335
Providence, Rhode Island 02906

Dance Movement with Seniors (Dance Therapy)
Dorothy Jungels
Rhode Island Arts Council
334 Westminster Mall
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

Westminster Mall Senior Center
Brad Smoker, Director
Senior Follies Theatre Workshop
Rhode Island State Arts Council
Family of Man Foundation
Box 2414 - A East Station
Providence, Rhode Island 02906

Geriatric Day Care Center Drama Program
Rose Pavlow
Geriatric Day Care Center
Warwick Central Baptist Church
Warwick Rhode Island

SOUTH CAROLINA

Arts for Elders Program
Harry Harrison, Special Programs Coordinator
South Carolina Arts Commission
Boylston House
1829 Richland Street
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

SOUTH DAKOTA

"The Gray Stage"
Darryl F. Pattern, Director of Theatre
Dakota Wesleyan University
Mitchell, South Dakota 57301

TENNESSEE

Evening Star
Joan Hensley
Tennessee Arts Commission
Kingsport Tennessee Department Parks and Recreation
P.O. Box 3296
Kingsport, Tennessee 37664

TEXAS

"Act Your Age"
Joyce Chamber-Selber
Austin Repertory Theatre
1600 Rio Grande, Suite 203
Austin, Texas 78701

Creative Drama Workshops for Senior Citizens
Joyce Chamber-Selber
3400 Toro Canyon Drive
Austin, Texas 78746

VIRGINIA

Evergreen Players
Rose Sokal, Director
Evergreen House
Senior Citizen Complex
6925 Columbia Pike
Annandale, Virginia

Fairfax, Virginia
Pat Archer
Recreation Department
Fairfax, Virginia

Theatre Arts for Older Americans Course
Patch Clark
Department of Theatre
Virginia Commonwealth University
901 West Franklin Street
Richmond, Virginia 23284

Theatre Wagon
Ms. Margaret Collins and Fletcher Collins, Co-Producers
437 East Beverley Street
Staunton, Virginia 24401

WASHINGTON

Project Joy
Gloria Joiraman, Director
West 1201 Spofford Avenue
P.O. Box 5079
Spokane, Washington 99205

The Artist in the City
Lynn Buell
Seattle Arts Commission
305 Harrison Street
Seattle, Washington 98109

Crazy Quilt, The Hard Times Theatre
Stephanie Ross
Arts Resource Service
119 Blanchard
Seattle, Washington 98121

WISCONSIN

Programs on Aging
Ann Ostrom, Program Coordinator
University of Wisconsin - Extension
Helen O'Brien, Program Coordinator and Performer
610 Langdon Street
Madison, Wisconsin 53706

Broom Street Theatre Elderly Project
Gary Aylesworth and Joel Gersman
c/o Ann Ostrom, Program Coordinator
Programs on Aging
University of Wisconsin - Extension
610 Langdon Street, Room 230
Madison, Wisconsin 53706

Special Audiences Program
Jane Lundy Becker
Performing Arts Center
929 North Water Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202

XYZ - Golden Agers
Mary Ellen Ebert
1667 South 24th Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53204

Senior Citizen Theatre
Bill and Charlotte Broomall, Co-Directors
7042 Aetna Court
Wauwatosa, Wisconsin 53213

ARTS NETWORK

Alliance for Arts Education
Jack Kukuk, Director of Education
John F. Kennedy Center
Washington, D.C. 20506

American Arts Alliance (AAA)
James Backas, Executive Director
424 C Street, N.E.
Washington, D.C.

American Council for the Arts
Nancy Bush, Acting President
570 Seventh Avenue
New York, New York 10018

Washington Office
2000 P Street, N.W.
Suite 419
Washington, D.C. 20036

American Council for the Arts in Education (ACAE)
2000 P Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C.

American Theatre Association (ATA)
Dr. Jack Morrison, Executive Director
1000 Vermont Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005

Association of College, University and Community Arts Administrators (ACUCAA)
William Dawson, Executive Director
P.O. Box 2137
Madison, Wisconsin

Business Committee for the Arts
Gavin K. MacBain, Chairman
1700 Broadway
New York, New York 10019

Center for Arts Administration
Graduate School of Business
University of Wisconsin - Madison
1155 Observatory Drive
Madison, Wisconsin 53706

Center for Arts Information
Ellen Thurston, Director
152 West 42nd Street
New York, New York 10036

Federal Council on the Arts and Humanities
Livingston Biddle and Joseph Duffy, Co-Chairmen
Joan Mondale, Honorary Chairman
One McPherson Square
Washington, D.C. 20005

Music Educators National Conference
1902 Association Drive
Reston, Virginia 22091

National Aesthetic Education Learning Center
Bennett Tarleton, Director
John F. Kennedy Center
2700 F Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20565

National Art Education Association
Dr. John Maklmann, Executive Director
1916 Association Drive
Reston, Virginia 22091

National Arts and The Handicapped Information Service
Arts Box 2040
Grand Central Station
New York, New York 10017

National Assembly of Community Arts Agencies
1625 Eye Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20006

National Assembly of State Arts Agencies
Roy H. Helms, Executive Director
1010 Vermont Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005

National Center on Arts for the Aging/NCOA
Jacqueline Sunderland, Director
1828 L Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

National Committee Arts for the Handicapped
Wendy Perks, Executive Director
1701 K Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

National Council for the Arts and Education, Inc.
Francis Richard, Executive Director
743 Fifth Avenue
New York, New York 10022

National Dance Association
Dr. Margie Hanson, Executive Director
1201 16th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

National Endowment for the Arts
Livingston Biddle, Jr., Chairman
2401 "E" Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20506

National Endowment for the Humanities
Joseph Duffy, Chairman
806 15th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20506

Speech Communication Association
520 Leesburg Pike
Falls Church, Virginia 22041

Theatre Communications Group
Peter Ziesler, Director
355 Lexington Avenue
New York, New York 10017

U.S. House of Representatives
Subcommittee on Select Education
Representative Paul Simon, Chairman
Washington, D.C. 20515

Post-Secondary Education Subcommittee
Representative William D. Ford, Chairman
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

House Appropriations Committee on Interior and Related Agencies
Representative Sidney Yates, Chairman
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

National Arts and The Handicapped Information Service
Arts Box 2040
Grand Central Station
New York, New York 10017

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Washington, D.C. 20506

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520 Leesburg Pike
Falls Church, Virginia 22041

Theatre Communications Group
Peter Ziesler, Director
355 Lexington Avenue
New York, New York 10017

AGING NETWORK

Action
806 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20525

Action for Independent Maturity (AIM)
1909 K Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20006

Administration on Aging (AOA)
Office of Human Development
U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare
330 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

Adult Education Association of the U.S.A. (AEA)
810 Eighteenth Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20006

American Association of Retired Persons (AARP)
1909 K Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20049

Federal Council on the Aging - DHEW
Nelson Cruikshank, Chairman
Room 4260, HEW North
330 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

Gray Panthers
3700 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19104

Information Resource Center
National Clearinghouse on Aging
Administration on Aging
Room 4259, DHEW, North Building
330 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

National Caucus/Center on the Black Aged
1730 M Street, N.W. - Suite 811
Washington, D.C. 20036

National Council of Senior Citizens (NCSC)
1511 K Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005

National Council on the Aging
Jack Ossofsky, Executive Director
1828 L Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

Senate Special Committee on Aging
Lawton Giles, Chairman
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

U.S. House of Representatives
Select Committee on Aging
Representative Claude Pepper, Chairman
Washington, D.C. 20515